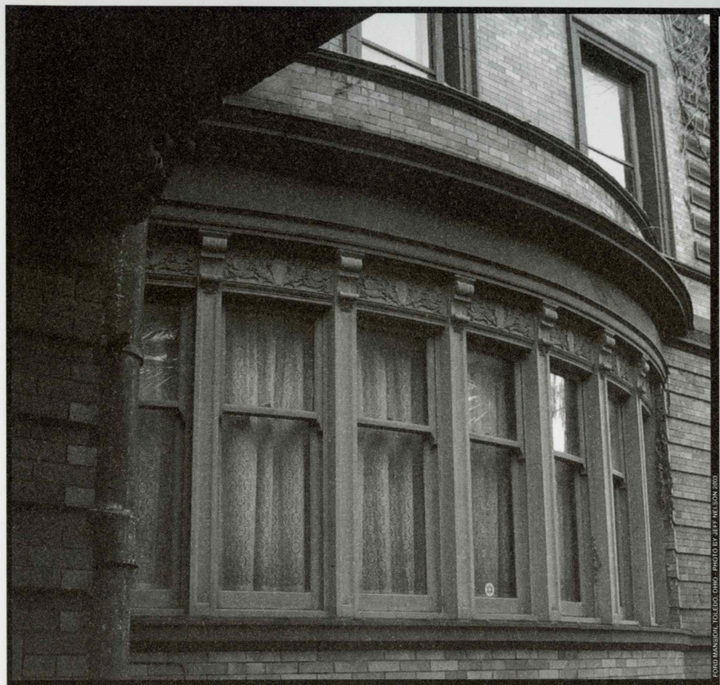
loud paper
DEDICATED TO
INCREASING THE VOLUME
OF
ARCHITECTURAL DIS-
-COURSE
$3.95 V4. NO.3
wCHybrid.tif @ 16.7% (RGB)
TWINS"
03 >
7 25274 957750



MINOR THREAT

FORD MANSION, TOLEDO, OHIO PHOTO BY JEFF HILSON 2000

Records & Stuff We Sell:

141. Q AND NOT U	'X-Polynation / Book of Flags'	Ⓐ
140. MINOR THREAT	First Demo Tape	Ⓐ
138. BEAUTY PILL	'You Are Right to be Afraid' CD ONLY	Ⓐ
137. LUNGFISH	'Love is Love'	Ⓑ
136. RADIO CPR	**Benefit Compilation: El Guapo, French Toast, Head-Roc, others.** CD ONLY	Ⓑ
135. BLACK EYES	10-song album	Ⓑ
134. EL GUAPO	'Fake French'	Ⓑ
133. Q AND NOT U	'Different Damage'	Ⓑ
130. FUGAZI	'The Argument'	Ⓑ
125. 20th BOX SET	**3 CD Set: 134-page book, 73 songs (21 unreleased)**	Ⓔ
63. CIRCUS LUPUS	'Super Genius' remaster CD ONLY	Ⓑ
40. MINOR THREAT	**CD remastered** CD ONLY	Ⓒ
27. MINOR THREAT	**Now on DVD - 3 Live Shows: DC Space, Buff Hall, 9:30 Club**	Ⓓ
14. DISCHORD 1981	Teen Idles, Minor Threat SOA, GI's, Youth Brigade CD ONLY	Ⓑ

Price Guide, including postage, in U.S. $:

	U.S.A.	SURFACE & CANADA	Airmail
Ⓐ 7"/CD single	4.00	5.00	7.00
Ⓑ LP/CD	10.00	11.00	14.00
Ⓒ MaxiCD	12.00	13.00	15.00
Ⓓ Video/DVD	18.00	20.00	23.00
Ⓔ Box Set	25.00	29.00	35.00

ORDERS: www.dischord.com (703) 351-7507 dischord@dischord.com
We accept most credit cards and, of course, real money.
Stores: Let's deal direct! direct@dischord.com or fax (703) 351-7582

Illustrated **CATALOG!** please send one US $ or 3 US Stamps or 4 IRC's.

DISCHORD RECORDS

For a plain but complete LIST of all records, send us a US stamp or an IRC.

3819 BEECHER ST. NW, WASH., D.C. 20007-1802

urban operations studio

fashion . furniture . graphics

www.urbanops.org / info@urbanops.org

** THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK **

Andy Jenkins David Choe Doze Green Evaq Geoff McFetridg Grey Jean Michael Basquiat Sam Flores Seen Stash Zephyr1971 Design Co.2K 594 Apparel
Basquiat Bigfoot Black Panthers Cybelle Evolve Uh Exact Science Fatchen Ferris Plock Flav
Footlong Development Frank151 Respect Fresco Fifty 24SF Gentle Fawn GM5 House of Grml
Love Design Imaginary Foundation Kingsize losangelistic Minnesota
Nefra Nice and Smooth OBEY revolution Reprezent Ricky Powell Sam Flores
Soul Rebel Tank Theory Toro Ve Ubiquity Upper Playground XThreadz
Zoo York ABB Records Anticon Axe Records Big Dada
Bomb HipHop Chocolate Indus Eastern Conference Emb
Hip Hop History HipHop SlamL Barter une Now Again
Ozone Practice Video Magazi Project Rawkus Rhymesayers
Seven Heads Stones Throw S Wide Hive Records Abstract R
Aceyalone Aesop Rock Anti P Design Atmosphere-Atoms Fami
Baba Beat Junkies Bigg Jus Blakrok Bob Marley Bobbito Breakestra
Bukue One Bus Driver C-Ray DJ Ox Common Copywrite
Crown City Rockers Damon Aaron Defa Mac Dermott Dose One
Doze Green EIP Eligh Fishbone E DJ Shadow Dose One
Grouch Hieroglyphics J-Live Otix Lateef The Truth Speake
Latryx Ledisi Lewis Taylor Live Human Living Legends
Lodeck Lootpack Lyrics Born Madlib M Masterminds
Me'shell Ndegeocello MF Doom MHz Mike Moka Only
Molemen Mos Def Mr. Dibbs Mr. Len
Mr. Lif Murs Mystic
Peanut Butter Wolf Prince Paul Psychokinetics Quasimoto Rasco
RJD2 Sage Francis Sum of Beyond
SupremeEx Sum 41 The COUP
The Pharcyde The Rebirth Angel
Vast Aire Visual Art
Living Music Showcases Accessories Home Furnishings
Books Vi Art Toy Figures Limited Editions

the GIANT PEACH

for a distinct style...

thegiantpeach.com

EDITORIAL
Ruth Keffer
Mimi Zeiger

MORE EDITORIAL
Chris Hall
Joy Knoblauch
Melinda Silva

ART DIRECTION + DESIGN
HAROUN+MOSQUEDA
with Tayler Kim

WEB DESIGN
Samuel Miller
www.binginit.com

ADVERTISING MANAGER
Richard A. Grijalva
horizonaesthetic advertising
P.O. Box 824
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 372-1459
horizonads@comcast.net

CONTRIBUTORS
Erik Adigard
Brian Alfred
Darrin Alfred
Doug Aitken
Periel Aschenbrand
Sean Baca
Julia Brown
Bryan Cantley
Martin de Leon II
Gil M. Doron
Todd Gannon
Mark Gee
Chris Grimley
Camden Joy
Julie Kim
Mariana Mogilevich
Tucker Nichols
Kevin O 'Donnell
Jorge Pardo
Eric Reeder
Pollyanna Rhee
Chris Salter
Todd Shalom
John Southern
Rick Stoddart
Linda Taalman
Bridget Venne
Courtney Walker

SUBSCRIPTIONS
$3.95 post paid for a sample issue
$15.00 post paid for four issues
(International rates vary)

THANKS
Bridget, Brian, Bryan, Camden, Chris, Clancey, Courtney, Darrin, Doris, Doug, Dung, Enrique, Erik Gil, Joe, John, Jorge, Julia, Julie, Jackson, Kevin, Kathleen, Kim, Linda, Mariana, Mark, Martin, Mickey, Nina, Periel, Pollyanna, Rick, Samuel, Sean, Steve, Todd and Tucker

GRANTS
Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts

SPONSORS
Helane and Ronald Zeiger

LOUD PAPER IS AVAILABLE FROM:

Armadillo Trading Company
(213) 937-7674

Desert Moon Periodicals
(800) 547-0182

Doormouse
(905) 426-5552

Speedimpex
(800) 928-9882

Ubiquity Distribution
(718) 875-5491

CONTACT
loud paper c/o Mimi Zeiger
1521 Le Roy Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94708
www.loudpapermag.com
loudpaper@loudpapermag.com

ISSN1523-8733
PRINTED IN CANADA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PG 04 BOOK REVIEWS:
YOU SHALL KNOW OUR VELOCITY
REVIEWED BY TODD GANNON
IRANSURBANISM
REVIEWED BY BRIDGET VENNE
DEAD CITIES
OUT OF GROUND ZERO: CASE STUDIES IN URBAN REINVENTION
REVIEWED BY MARIANA MOGILEVICH

12 BRIEF HISTORIES
ERIC REEDER

15 STILL STANDING
RICK STODDART

16 THE GARDEN IN THE MACHINE:
THE PAINTINGS OF BRIAN ALFRED
DARRIN ALFRED

20 ARCHITECT/ ARCHITECT
JULIE KIM

22 CHRONOPOLIS: INHABITING TIME
CHRIS SALTER AND ERIK ADIGARD

28 LOUD PAPER INTERVIEWS DOUG AITKEN
MARK GEE

34 SHED STORAGE OUTHOUSE WELCOME
TUCKER NICHOLS

38 TRANSGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE
GIL M. DORON

44 OH, HEIDEGGER: AN ESSAY ON LOVING AN ARCHITECT
PERIEL ASCHENBRAND

46 DIA: BEACON
LOUD PAPER INTERVIEWS ARCHITECT LINDA TAALMAN
RUTH KEFFER

50 TRESPASSING
CHRIS GRIMLEY

54 ART + COMMERCE
LOUD PAPER INTERVIEWS JORGE PARDO

56 CALL AND RESPONSE: THE ARCHITECTURE OF
FORM: ULA DIMENSION LABORATORY
RUTH KEFFER

63 FLUX = RAD
POLLYANNA RHEE

65 IÑIGO MANGLANO- OVALLE, ALLTAGSZEIT
(IN ORDINARY TIME)
REVIEWED BY DARRIN ALFRED

66 SIGNALS AND STATIC
LOUD PAPER INTERVIEWS CAMDEN JOY

68 MUSIC REVIEWS

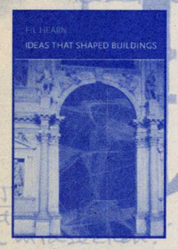
ABOUT **LOUD PAPER** IS DEDICATED TO INCREASING THE VOLUME OF ARCHITECTURAL DISCOURSE. IT IS A SLAM-BAMGETITOUTTHERE WAY OF LINKING ARCHITECTURAL THOUGHTS, MUSINGS, AND NEW WORK WITH THE CULTURE AT LARGE. **LOUD PAPER** IS OPEN TO ALL STUDENTS, ARCHITECTS, EDUCATORS, GIRLS ABOUT TOWN, DEAR JOHNS AND CRITICS AS A PLACE FOR WRITING LOUD ABOUT ARCHITECTURE AND CULTURE. SUBMISSIONS OF ARTICLES, PROJECTS, BOOK AND MUSIC REVIEWS ARE ENCOURAGED.

New books from The MIT Press

Me++

The Cyborg Self and the Networked City
William J. Mitchell

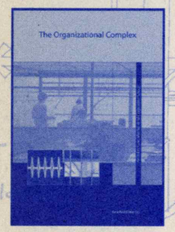
"Savvy, insightful and provocative, *Me++* is required reading for anyone baffled by the present and concerned about the future."
— Mark C. Taylor, Columbia University and Williams College
312 pp. $27.95



Ideas That Shaped Buildings

Fil Hearn

"Lucidly summarizes two thousand years of theorizing about architecture in an easy-to-read primer wisely organized both chronologically and thematically."
— Roger K. Lewis, University of Maryland School of Architecture
312 pp., 121 illus. $18.95 paper



The Organizational Complex

Architecture, Media, and Corporate Space
Reinhold Martin

"With brilliant insight and exciting new research based on important primary sources, Martin develops a fascinating narrative of the interlocking development of organizational and architectural thought and practice during the 'boom period' of office building between 1945 and 1960."
— Anthony Vidler, The Cooper Union
350 pp., 126 illus. $39.95

Modernism in Serbia

The Elusive Margins of Belgrade Architecture, 1919–1941
by Ljiljana Blagojevic

"With this pioneering study of the Serbian modern movement, the MIT Press continues to uncover Eastern Europe's lost architectural cultures." — Kenneth Frampton, Columbia University
336 pp., 300 illus. $34.95

now in paperback

The Details of Modern Architecture

Volume 1
Edward R. Ford

Considers how the great architects of this century reconciled their vision of architecture with the realities of building.
451 pp., 522 illus. $39.95 paper

The Details of Modern Architecture

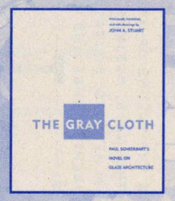
Volume 2: 1928 to 1988
Edward R. Ford

"A fine book and an invaluable reference . . . It is well written, always interesting, and represents a massive investment of effort."
— *Architect's Journal*
466 pp., 513 illus. $39.95 paper

Reyner Banham

Historian of the Immediate Future
Nigel Whiteley

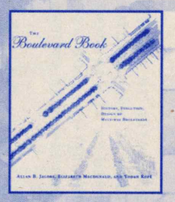
"Nigel Whiteley's brilliant analysis has the energy and scope of Banham's best writing—and also the clarity and honesty to reveal his subject's shortcomings."
— *The Washington Post Book World*
514 pp., 89 illus. $22.95 paper



The Gray Cloth

Paul Scheerbart's Novel on Glass Architecture
Paul Scheerbart, introduced, translated, and with drawings by John A. Stuart

"In *The Gray Cloth*, Scheerbart shows that even in the most edifying buildings, the human comedy finds a home."
— *Architecture*
136 pp., 5 color illus. $18.95 paper



The Boulevard Book

History, Evolution, Design of Multiway Boulevards
Allan B. Jacobs, Elizabeth Macdonald, and Yodan Rofé

"*The Boulevard Book* is, more accurately, a multiway boulevard encyclopedia."
— *Landscape Australia*
267 pp., 198 illus. $24.95 paper

Biopolis

Patrick Geddes and the City of Life
Volker M. Welter, foreword by Iain Boyd Whyte

"A landmark study that analyzes the complex ideas that lie behind Geddes's work with fresh clarity and insight." — *Choice*
379 pp., 74 illus. $24.95 paper

To order call **800-405-1619.**
Prices subject to change without notice.
http://mitpress.mit.edu

BOOKREVIEWS

PGS. 04/05

YOU SHALL KNOW OUR VELOCITY
Dave Eggers
McSweeney's Books, 2002
Reviewed by Todd Gannon

Disclaimer: The author of this review claims no expertise in the field of literature. Certain well-read readers will no doubt have encountered some of the devices mentioned below in the work of earlier writers-writers with whom the present author is very likely not all that familiar. The author urges those readers, who are perhaps already gloating about their literary superiority, not to dismiss him just yet. The goal here is not historical; the petty establishment of dibs on these devices isn't going to do anyone any good, in the long run. Instead, I simply wish to make a few observations on literary technique that may interest those involved in the making of and discussion about the built environment.

It risks little to assert that people do not read as much as they used to. Visual media is far too efficient. If a picture is worth a thousand words, what writer can keep up with twenty-four frames per second? Do the math. One episode of *Friends* would make *War and Peace* look like *Green Eggs and Ham*. The video age seems to have doomed literature to play second fiddle to the almighty TV. And if things look this bleak for fiction, architecture must really be in trouble.

This brand of hyperbolic ranting should sound familiar. Victor Hugo included similar lamentations in *Notre Dame du Paris*, nineteenth-century painters bemoaned the advent of photography, and apocalyptic pronouncements drip from the pages of *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, Daniel Boorstin's 1962 attack on visual hegemony. But Hugo's book didn't kill the building, photography didn't end painting, and visual media won't do us in today. In fact, today's young writers and architects continue to wring impressive vitality from their respective disciplines, often taking direct cues from those threatening images.

EVERYTHING WITHIN TAKES PLACE AFTER JACK DIED AND BEFORE MY MOM AND I DROWNED IN A BURNING FERRY IN THE COOL TANNIN-TINTED GUAVIARE RIVER, IN EAST-CENTRAL COLOMBIA, WITH FORTY-TWO LOCALS WE HADN'T YET MET. IT WAS A CLEAR AND EYEBLUE DAY, THAT DAY, AS WAS THE FIRST DAY OF THIS STORY, A FEW YEARS AGO IN JANUARY, ON CHICAGO'S NORTH SIDE, IN THE OPULENT SHADOW OF WRIGLEY AND WITH THE WIND COMING LOW AND SEARCHING OFF THE JAGGED HALF-FROZEN LAKE. I WAS INSIDE, VERY WARM, WALKING FROM DOOR TO DOOR.

Dave Eggers is a case in point. He is editor of *McSweeney's*, a renegade literary journal that spotlights experimental, media-savvy writers. In both web (www.mcsweeneys.net) and print formats, a stable of up-and-coming scribes shares the stage with such prodigious talents as Zadie Smith, Rick Moody, David Foster Wallace (a past recipient of the MacArthur Foundation "Genius Grant"), and Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Chabon. Eggers's new novel, You *Shall Know Our Velocity*, was released last November to mixed reviews. Though exceptions exist, most of those reviews adhere to the following formula:

1. Establish high expectations for *YSKOV* based on the success/quality of Eggers's debut memoir, *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* (AHWOSG), 2000.
2. Digress into a discussion of Eggers the media figure. Note his ironic and contradictory nature with regard to literature, money, fame, et cetera. Admit either jealousy of or disdain for Eggers's success.
3. Summarize the plot: Following the death of their friend Jack, Will and Hand attempt to travel around the world in a week to give away $32,000.
4. Proclaim general disappointment with *YSKOV*, because it did not meet the high expectations established in Step One. Employ the following terms: self-indulgent, gimmicky, rambling, lazy, sophomoric, vague, naïve, condescending.
5. Temper comments made in Step Four with glowing praise of the writing. Appropriate adjectives include bold, inventive, precise, lucid, important, dazzling, intoxicating, and sincere.
6. Grapple with the contradictions of just having completed Steps Four and Five.
7. Close with commentary on Eggers's position in contemporary literature, and predict the quality of his next offering. Whether praising or panning, use superlatives.

Popular treatments tend to downplay the work itself, focusing instead on the media frenzy surrounding Eggers and his exploits. (E.g.: Coming off the success of *AHWOSG*, Eggers fired his agent and turned down seven-figure advances only to release *YSKOV*, in a limited print run of 50,000 from his own imprint, and distributed only to independent booksellers). Most literary analyses favor comparisons to Jack Kerouac and J.D. Salinger, but countless others, larded with references to Milan Kundera, Italo Calvino, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Miguel de Cervantes, et. al., are undoubtedly underway in English departments across the country.

Given the glut of attention the book has already received, I will refrain from rehearsing the above formula. Suffice it to say that *YSKOV* is a good read, though its many typos provoke mild disappointment. Like bad details on a building, these unfortunate errors clamor for attention, undermining the efficacy of the book's literary ambitions.

It is these ambitions that interest the present critic. For with his clever writing and brash experimentalism, Eggers pushes the boundaries of his discipline. Page after page, he searches for those effects that books alone can engender. Sure, some of his experiments fizzle, but others broach new territory. And the gains are well worth a few minor misfires.

YSKOV begins on its jacketless cover with no title, no copyright page, no foreplay whatsoever–a technique common in recent action films (XXX, Spider-Man, etc.) that abandons customary tropes. Traditionally, the title sequence sets the mood, easing the psychic transition into the imaginary space of the story. Without it, one does not slip imperceptibly into that space. One falls.

The vacillating scenes of a simple picaresque cushion the landing. This straightforward framework–two guys on the move-structured the adventures of Don Quixote, Huckleberry Finn and Dean Moriarty and here provides Eggers a resilient foil for his linguistic experiments.

Shifting imagery even infiltrates moments of stasis, as an early passage attests. The narrator, Will, instructs the reader to imagine him at a desk overlooking a meadow and a stream. The desk lies atop a ten-story building that extends down into the earth. The building is Will's mind, within which his memories are cataloged by "a staff of humanoid people, oily and pale and without hair–they are moles and look like it, with huge square yellow teeth and mouths of fire." Will requests his memories from the mole people, and these are swiftly brought up and laid before him on the desk. From page thirty-one:

But lately I'd be sitting at my desk, trying either to work or to just admire the view and wonder about the stream, what makes it go, if there are fish inside, what their names might be, if any of them are secretly talking fish and if so what they might say–when there will suddenly be a library staff member at my side, and she will have one hand on my back, and the other will be pointing to the contents of the file she's brought me and has opened on my desk, so that I will follow her finger to where she's pointing, and when I see what she's pointing to I will gasp.

I never want to see that fucking clipping again. I was outraged at my mom for keeping it. What kind of psycho would do that? She didn't show it to me but there it was, in the drawer where we keep the scissors and envelopes and clippings.

The passage continues to dance promiscuously between topics, from the memory moles to contented reflections on his former job to painful ones on Jack's funeral. Canny sentence structure and punctuation erase rifts in subject matter and the passage is rendered as seamless montage–literary technique applied to produce a cinematic effect.

Visual images also fall within the range of Eggers's experiments. A clever example replaces verbal description with miniature color pictures of three Ford Broncos, as out of place on the printed page as are the fictional trucks in the scene described. Cryptic notes penned by the characters are reproduced photographically and a description of birds in flight hinges about a photograph (though a missing line of text ruins the effect).

Elsewhere, three blank pages denote a long pause. By removing the abstraction of written language, Eggers confronts us with the physicality of the book itself. In the absence of text, we savor the sensuality of reading–the book's heft and texture, the time that passes with the turn of a page. In that span, meaning is suspended. Pure sensation takes its place.

You can't do that on television. These devices punctuate *YSKOV* with potent effects that assert the specific capacity of the literature in the twenty-first century.

Many young practices pursue similar effects in architecture. Trading the dense and arcane for the clear and direct, these architects elicit startling originality from workaday programs, small budgets, and common materials. A few examples:

MVRDV: Bold colors and absurd cantilevers transform WoZoCo, an otherwise anonymous retirement home in suburban Amsterdam, into a magazine favorite. Similar marriages of the everyday and the unthinkable drive recent projects including the Hannover Expo Pavilion, Container City, and Studio Thonik.

Lewis Tsuramaki Lewis: In projects and installations such as Mies-on-a-Beam, New Suburbanism, and Slip Space, LTL deploys shrewd analyses and exquisite architectural drawings to, as they state, "exploit the potency of the unfamiliar that lurks behind the façade of familiarity."

Kennedy & Violich Architecture: Capitalizing upon unforeseen material possibilities, KVA peels drywall away into sculptural swirls *(Fabrications)*, conjures fabrics that glow *(Give-Back Curtain)* and convinces plywood to carry data and electricity (Electrolum inescent).

PXS: The Los Angeles firm of Robert Somol and Linda Pollari eschews what they refer to as the recent "fetish of difficulty" and instead pursue an architecture of "the easy." In their own house as well as in recent competition entries, straightforward forms, off-the-shelf materials, and expedient planning come together to get the job done without breaking a sweat.

As Eggers opines on his own unconventional tendencies (on the copyright page of *AHWOSG*, no less), the use of such techniques "does not mean that someone is being pomo or meta or cute." Rather, it suggests a refreshing pragmatism. He continues:

the fact that this paperback version [of *AHWOSG*] starts from both sides, and that the reader must turn it over, lengthwise, to read from one side or the other, does not mean that it is frivolous or, in parlance, too clever for its own good. It simply means that this was the best way to approach the problem of this appendix, which does not start from where the book leaves off, but starts from another point, an opposite point.

In general, not everything that is new is trendy; not everything that is different is gimmicky; not everything that is truthful must fall within well-known formal parameters. The goal is to have fun and push forward, no?

Good advice. So let's hang up our critical pretensions, quit worrying about obsolescence, have fun, and push forward. We can start by focusing on what buildings alone can do, and stop trying so hard to read them.

TRANSURBANISM
Joke Brower, Arjen Mulder and Laura Martz, editors
V2Publishing/NAI Publishers, 2002
Reviewed by Bridget Venne

The City is dead – long live the city. This inherent paradox is the core of *TransUrbanism*; a collection of essays that attempts to interpret the change globalization has wrought on urban space, world culture and social interaction. Rampant growth and instantaneous forms of communication have transformed cities from separate pockets of urban space to what co-editor Arjen Mulder calls an "urban field, a collection of activities instead of a material structure." This field is not defined by a geographical, a political or even an architectural boundary, but by a technological one – the availability of cell phone service. Urban edges are defined by the ability to avoid roaming charges. This analogy seemed strained, even silly, to me until my roommate visited her relatives in rural northeastern Nevada: without her cell phone, she seemed to have traveled to another planet. Technology has indeed wrought vast changes on what we discern as urban.

PGS. 08/09

This urban field is by no means homogenous. It is scarred by the tumultuous transformation of cities defined by landmarks, unique cultural practices and rigid discernable grids into cities built to support urban activities. Reflecting this manifestation, *TransUrbanism* seems intentionally chaotic; the editors juxtapose manifestos on the urban experience, interviews of prominent urbanists and descriptions of interactive art installations with dizzying speed, and intersperse deliciously mind-boggling graphical analyses of the urban fabric. The organization of the essays is disconcerting at first, but each essay has a degree of merit in and of itself. Eventually they coalesce into a ragged, but intriguing, whole.

Although varied, the pieces share two conclusions about the current nature of urban space. The first is that unchecked, unplanned urban growth is inevitable, whether it is new cities in developing countries or suburbs in developed countries. The second is that globalization is diluting the identity of individual cities, blurring their unique characteristics into the black-and-white duality of urban versus rural. Commercialism figures heavily in the causes of both these phenomena. Capitalism overtly defines the urban fabric, from providing funds to build urban areas to spreading identical stores from São Paulo to Shanghai. Andreas Ruby's essay, "Transgressing Urbanism," postulates that market pressures have driven cities to evolve into symbolic representations of themselves. Every city, in order to promote business or tourism, emphasizes certain areas and landmarks while downplaying others. This is taken to one extreme in Las Vegas, with its representations of famous cities distilled into hotel theme parks and to another in Bilbao, where the previously unknown city, through association with Frank Gehry's Guggenheim, has become a household brand name.

Mark Wigley's essay "Resisting the City" takes this idea still further. He argues that all urban areas now consist of nearly identical continual streams of commercialized images. Like the medieval city, today's urban areas are merely idealized portraits that suit our imaginations far better than the real thing. A certain level of idealism does seem necessary to sustain a sense of security in the face of unpredictable metropolitan life. Feeling homesick on a lengthy trip to Japan, I visited a Starbucks in the center of Osaka that, from menus to music, could have been wholly built in Seattle. This short visit helped me to cope with the many differences in language, culture and weather that I encountered. It is the inevitability of a Grande Frappuccino or Big Mac that shows the influence of globalization and commercialism on the city.

The most intriguing essays in *TransUrbanism*, however, chronicle how visionaries utilize the intersection of random activities within the urban field to create interactive art. An interview with Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, an electronic performance artist, illustrates how two of his art installations attempt to create "coming together" – individually participating in an activity where other people's actions have an effect on your own. It is chaos theory on a community scale. One of his earlier works, *Vectorial Elevation*, allowed users to manipulate light sculptures over the Internet, and see their creations in real time at Mexico City's Zocalo Plaza.

This effort, though intriguing, seems more flashy than collaborative; the separation imposed by the Internet relegates it to the mere spectacle of distant spotlights. *Body Movies*, a more recent work, projected portraits on the walls surrounding the Schouwburgplein Square in Rotterdam that were only visible in the shadows of people in the square below. Through the intermingling of shadows, people had the opportunity to participate in a community event. Although the results of this interaction are limited, with only a certain number of both portraits and participants, the installation begins to develop the potential that Lozano-Hemmer envisions.

D-Tower, an interactive sculpture located in Doetinchem, the Netherlands, attempts to go beyond mere interaction – it directly responds to emotions collected through Internet-based surveys. The tower changes color depending on what emotion was most prevalent during the day in each quadrant of the city. Therefore, people passing the tower can react not only to the form of the sculpture, but to the emotions it is displaying. Although the concept, and especially the survey itself, is interesting and even amusing, the truly intriguing fact is that none of these interactive installations can exist properly outside of the new global and technological urbanism and the potential it has for random interaction. These artistic pieces show that, while the city may no longer have an individual identity, it may be able to create community.

Art installations and urban criticism are strange bedfellows. Yet as a collection of ideas, the book holds together quite well. All of the essays attempt to explore the potentials that exist within the changing urban fabric and all of them present subtly unique visions. *TransUrbanism* has the potential to overwhelm or enthrall, but read at a reasonable pace, the essays present several fascinating views of the complex technological system that has replaced the city.

DEAD CITIES
Mike Davis
New Press, 2002

OUT OF GROUND ZERO: CASE STUDIES IN URBAN REINVENTION
Joan Ockman, editor
Temple Hoyne Buell Center & Prestel, 2002

Reviewed by Mariana Mogilevich

After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, a new city rose in place of the old one almost as quickly as everything had burned to the ground. Developers, bankers, and even the city government were so excited to get their hands on the 1,800 destroyed city blocks and start rebuilding that there was no time to waste building a memorial or even prosecuting those responsible for the conflagration. The Loop came to be worth far more with no buildings in it than it had been fully occupied. In just two years Chicago was rebuilt with eclectic, unstable investments no more fireproof than their predecessors. These speculative, provisional buildings would not last very long themselves and central Chicago would be rebuilt twenty years later.

In the wake of the partial destruction of lower Manhattan, opportunistic publishers released a flurry of books to cash in on the disaster. Each presents interpretations and representations of the void in the city. Bookstore shelves were lined with editions of photographs, new theoretical works, architectural appreciations and first person narratives long before the question of rebuilding was pondered in any significant way. The Great Fire reminds us that other ground zeroes existed before Manhattan requisitioned the term. The Chicago story is recounted in a recent compilation of urban reconstruction case studies. Each examines how a number of other cities have dealt with comparable blows.

Another conspicuous release in recent months has been Mike Davis' *Dead Cities*. The title alone cashes in on the vogue of urban calamity. Over the last decade, Davis has become the great dystopian interpreter of the American City. His passionate *Ecology of Fear is The Jungle* of our day. Chronicling Los Angeles' impending doom, it gave me nightmares about urban decay and natural disasters thousands of miles away. What might happen when Davis turned his attention East, to my own hometown, New York City?

In the first of many disappointments, one discovers that *Dead Cities* is not about New York at all. Upon opening the book, its real title is revealed to be *Dead Cities and Other Tales*, the other tales being in fact reprints of articles Davis has published over the last twelve years, some updated for the occasion with little postscripts. The book's preface reviews in a rather cursory fashion the destruction of New York and then goes on to question how the country's new sense of heightened alert effects the future of the city. While fear and loathing have always gone hand in hand with our image of the city, the new technologies designed to combat these real and imagined threats are dramatically altering the forms of the city. In the process they may make the city obsolete. Davis' reminder of all the firms that fled New York City post-9/11 for corporate office parks sends shivers down one's spine. After that comforting analysis, Davis and *Dead Cities* mercifully turn their attention to the West, leaving New Yorkers with the modest comfort that things could be worse. They could be Angelenos.

The West has long led the way in unsound urban development and ecological disaster. Davis takes us on a tour of Western wastelands and high growth areas, spaces which sometimes overlap, to reveal dead cities we could never have imagined. The essay "Berlin's Skeleton in Utah's Closet" is a tour of the remains of "German Village" on a military base outside Salt Lake City. In World War II, it was part of a five-square mile replica of German and Japanese towns constructed solely to test the best methods for burning down the real cities on which they were modeled. The complex was meticulously designed to share the same kind of wood, moisture levels–even drapes and furniture–as workers' housing in Berlin or Hamburg. Then the miniature city was firebombed and rebuilt several times. The Utah experiments helped the U.S. and British armies successfully incinerate numerous German and Japanese cities and the people who lived in them. The vast expanses of the American West provided a cover for all sorts of military malfeasance, from nuclear tests whose effects continue to affect downwind populations, to toxic waste dumping which continues to this day. Salt Lake City's suburban fringe is now creeping out towards these ravaged landscapes, precipitating a collision between two kinds of American progress.

Much of *Dead Cities* centers on Los Angeles, where we review Davis' work on its follies. Los Angeles is the model of the bad city, the one he loves to hate. His criticisms are no longer unfamiliar: disinvestment in the center city, or very selective investment which subsidizes high rent office buildings over public spaces and affordable housing, the disappearance of jobs and social services for urban residents, escalating violence fueled by police brutality and jail culture, and institutionalized racism manifest in a growing "spatial apartheid." Terrorist attacks are not the only way of inflicting wounds on a city. Promises to help rebuild Los Angeles after the Rodney King riots in 1992 were quickly forgotten. The city dies a little every day, and though each tragedy is small, the cumulative effect far surpasses that ofa sixteen-acre hole. But we need this sort of catalogue of horrors to make us see and to ensure that we won't forget.

Davis gives free reign to his apocalyptic visions, imagining scientifically the dead cities in our future. He envisions our great cities entirely abandoned. Structures collapse and are reclaimed by nature. Some plants and animals thrive in the waste we leave behind us, in this Twenty-Second Century Wild America. These apocalyptic fantasies have their precedent in nineteenth century stories of wild London (and *Blade Runner*). But Davis brings to these fictions an air of prophecy, and loses us with his extremism. His indignation, his almost gleeful despair alienates this great cultural critic from his public in this often heavy-handed book. Davis is furious about so many things that they start to become confused. He rails against Southern California's military-industrial complex, then complains that base closings and "the end-of-Cold-War shrinkage of the conventional military has closed the single most important employment option for ghetto and barrio youth." It is sad and surprising to see Davis give up on the city, as if it were already a lost cause. After Davis has spent his career fascinating us with the city's mysteries and charms, this renunciation is unconvincing. We're left all wound up with no place to go.

Out of Ground Zero, focusing on the sad fates of cities other than New York, allows for a similar sigh of relief at the suffering of others. The urban reinvention case studies in the book were compiled from a series of lectures held last spring at Columbia University's School of Architecture in an attempt to see what lessons New York City in 2002 could draw from urban disasters past. How, these stories ask, do cities cope with and move beyond the disasters that befall them, or that they bring upon themselves?

The story of Chicago, with which we began, had its own happy ending, in that the shoddy reconstruction immediately after the fire served as a lesson to the architects like Daniel Burnham, John Root, and Louis Sullivan who would soon step in to replace a speculative, transitory Chicago with their solid and fireproof one, making the center city one of beauty and permanence which persist today.

Three essays in the book discuss cities damaged by World War II bombings. They were the real results of the simulated wars Mike Davis describes in the American West. While German and Japanese villages could be bombed and then immediately reconstructed by a team of engineers and Hollywood set builders, Rotterdam, Hiroshima, and Plymouth were on their own. The damage to all these city centers was devastating, and aerial before-and-after images are still painful to look at, particularly now that WWII bombings of civilian targets are the subject of intense scrutiny. But these ground zeroes were also sites of possibility. Sadly, in what is now the same old story of modern urbanism, the new cities satisfied neither architects nor their residents. Plymouth's "bold and comprehensive" rebuilding dragged on for years. Rotterdam's rebuilding on a modern plan left large public spaces without purpose and no structures of collective memory.

Memory is famously at the center of the new Hiroshima. The magnitude of the tragedy that befell that city (almost 200,000 dead as a result of the bomb, and still counting) opened the door to new urbanistic possibilities. The postwar competition for a new city promised a new era for Japanese architecture, as did Kenzo Tange's winning proposal. His design for the Peace City was a comprehensive plan for the city, blending Western and Japanese architectural traditions and his concern with creating a city where living and memorializing could coexist. His Peace Memorial Park was built, but at the center of a banal city shaped by postwar economic forces.

In his contribution, historian Max Page reviews "two centuries of real and imagined destruction of New York City." In Page's book *The Creative Destruction of Manhattan* Chicago 1999, he did a wonderful job of examining the city's culture of constant renovation in the early twentieth century. Here he expands on this moment to look at New York's disregard for its own history, and at recurrent fantasies of the city's demise: precisely what one would have expected *Dead Cities* to discuss. Page puts the reality of New York City's current situation in perspective–the city has been tearing itself apart and building back up constantly over the last century at least. The fact that it has always been in Le Corbusier's admiring phrase, "a city in the process of becoming," is at the city's essence, and a crucial part of its appeal. Page also cites a number of disasters overcome by the city, from the Battle of New York (1776, one-third of the city destroyed), to the Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire and, one could add, the city's bankruptcy and the entire decade of the 1970s.

The fictional attacks on New York which the real one so resembled and our recurrent fantasy of the city's spectacular demise are reflections of New York's immense cultural significance. It is not just a haughty symbol of wealth and greatness to be brought down. At the heart of New York is a commitment to public life, and the city still represents diversity and progress as much as multinational capital. "New York," Page writes, "has always embodied the most troubling and longstanding tensions in American history and life: the ambivalence towards cities, the troubled reaction to immigrants and racial diversity, the fear of technology's impact...." An attack on New York City, an attack on any city today, is an attack on civic life. It is essential to realize that, beyond fundamentalists, fires, or invading armies, we are the greatest threat to our cities and to ourselves.

In *Out of Ground Zero*'s epilogue, Benjamin Barber turns his attention to what has been lurking in the shadows throughout all of *Dead Cities*, the suburbs. And both he and Davis see the movement of people, capital and political power out of the cities and into the suburbs as our urban centers' death knell. Mike Davis ultimately blames the demise of central Los Angeles on government-supported movement of jobs and the white population out of the city. For Barber, the problem is more philosophical: suburban culture is "anything but civic and only problematically democratic." After 2,500 years of the civic world of towns and cities, he continues, "a public existence is not possible in an architecture designed exclusively for private consumption. It is not the commercialization of space but the privatization of space that plays havoc with citizenship." The world of shopping malls and gated communities grows exponentially, at the expense of the inner cities which Mike Davis prophesied as ruins restored to nature. This apocalypse collides with another when everyone moves away from the cities to live out their lives in safe, clean and homogeneous (read empty and exclusionary) sites. Rather than as the focus of destructive hatred, it is as the victim of neglect that the city will perish and our whole way of life with it.

Suburbanization is real, and has had a real impact on the way we live, but both authors make the same mistake. In their hand–wringing over sprawl and decentralization, in their fixation on the suburbs, which has been the obsession of academics and cultural critics for years, they do the same thing they accuse government officials and the middle class of doing. They too come to turn their backs on the cities–which, contrary to popular belief, are still standing. Even if, as Barber claims, the new suburban culture encompasses more than one-half of the American population–and this is oversimplification to say the least–what about everyone else? People continue to pour into American cities every year, not to mention the growth of cities in other areas of the globe (hardly anybody does). If people have not given up on cities, why must scholars and planners abandon them prematurely? The greatest lesson in rebuilding cities is precisely not to leave them agonizing, not to run for the hills. It is in facing our cities squarely in front of us that we can rise to their challenges.

The Urban Canvas

I am an architect, currently living and working in Seoul, Korea. Without exaggeration, modern-day Seoul is a city in constant transition, or more appropriately described, an entropic city. Within its very limited boundaries, the city has developed in unbridled fashion. Just twenty-five years ago the incredibly dense district where I live and work was lush forestland. Walking the streets daily, I can hardly believe this possible. Buildings rise in all possible locations. Every gap is filled with some make-shift function. A sliver of space between two nearly touching buildings is occupied by a storage shed and toilet. I wonder if the improvised use of this interstitial space (and many others like it) is even known to the person that owns the property. "Void" is not in my language here, nor do I think it is a part of this concentrated culture.

Seoul's dense composition is constantly reborn, leaving behind traces of brief existences. Ever-changing advertising appendages and decorative frou-frou masks any permanency in the city. Architecture here appears little more than a structurally supportive background for a collage of foreground announcements, a true urban canvas. With the passage of each tenancy, buildings here often accumulate fragments of the past. An old sign and rusty hardware puncturing the remains of a tattered awning are common reminders of another time.

I pass my favorite street corner two blocks from my office, a vibrant commercial district packed with traditional restaurants, bars and karaoke bars. Looking up, I am faced with facades of intertwined messages. Despite city regulations on acceptable display, tacky neon signs, plastic stick-on characters and faded posters are every-where. It is at this corner, a convergence unmistakably characteristic of Seoul, where building appears secondary to omnipotent ornament and decorated facade.

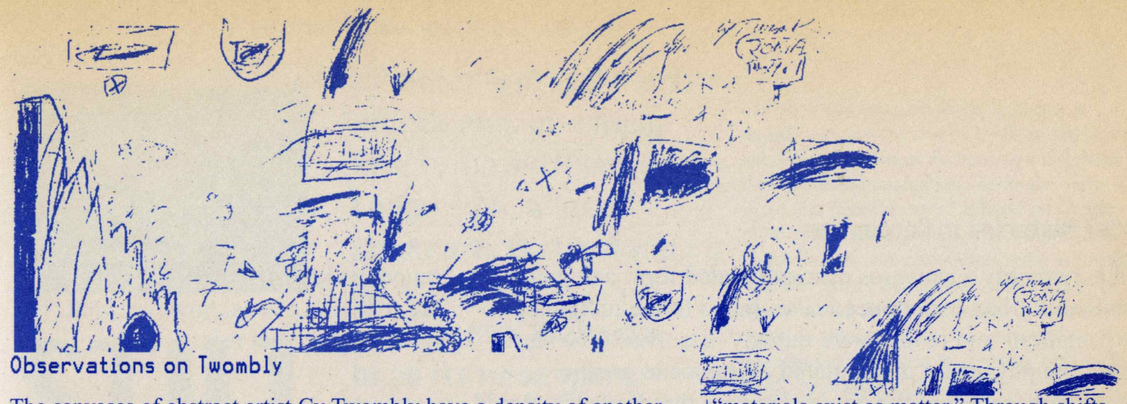
Cities in this part of the world are seductive. The flash and glitz of neon nights draw thousands of leisure-time seekers every evening to hopping commercial areas around the city. For me, these districts were initially shrouded in mystery and excitement, mostly extending from my lack of understanding hankul mal (the Korean language). It did not take long to recognize a common urban trend. Within the chaotic urban plan exists a latent horizontal hierarchy, an unplanned organization that is only discovered by venturing off into the successive horizontal depths of this endless place.

To describe the city in simple terms, I consider Seoul's double identity, the first defined by the primary urban arteries and the second being the incredibly complex inner blocks of commercial districts that punctuate the city. Primary roads are fronted with the modern presence of the city: high-rises and smaller multi-story structures line these through-ways. Proceeding toward the center of the block, away from main thoroughfares, is like moving toward a chaotic unknown. Anything goes.

I see much of Seoul on foot, exploring commercial district back roads, saturated as I wander by competing sights, sounds and smells. As I walk past a familiar twenty-four hour convenience store, I'm distracted by the shouts of neon signs above and booming music just ahead. Neighbor outdoing neighbor in order to be heard and seen is the name of the game. I make my way past numerous other establishments to a popular restaurant for dinner. Some are accessible at street level, while others are entered via narrow corridors that lead to mysteriously unseen above and below worlds. Possibilities for entry appear as infinite as the number of vibrantly lit advertisements, each linked to some unseen and uncertain location buried within the layers of city.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC REEDER

BRIEF HISTORIES



Observations on Twombly

The canvases of abstract artist Cy Twombly have a density of another kind, but much like the city of Seoul, they are layered with their own history. Each work is a record of its own making. Twombly's abstract language, in works such as The Italians and many others, takes the form of distorted words and letters, shapes and figures, scribbles and gestures, all painted and re-painted, and all frozen within their sequential deliverance to the neutral field of the canvas.

The Italians manifests a palimsestial quality. Layer partially washing out layer, as if the attempt to erase is done to emphasize previous intentional mishaps. The end result is a field of manipulated and bungled form that leaves the viewer searching for some way to connect with the original title. Critic Roland Barthes, who has written extensively on Twombly, observes that the marks and splotches of color "remain solely as things," independent of representation. In Twombly's paintings, Barthes suggests, "materials exist as matter." Through shifts, overlaps, and adjacencies of material, Twombly masterfully manipulates a limited palette. He pulls an oil-based crayon through an undisturbed neutral ground of latex paint, the act itself cutting through and exposing layers of making.

Twombly's paintings are brief histories, fragments of words and form that record and reflect moments in everyday life. Each fragment has its own story to tell, however obscure and concealed it may be. Twombly's paintings echo the city in the way they resemble the urban fragments, leftovers, and short-lived existences that punctuate Seoul.

CY TWOMBLY, THE ITALIANS 1961
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK
COURTESY THE ARTCHIVE.COM

Brief Histories in Conception

Like Twombly's canvases of manipulated form and color the Seoul urban experience leaves much to the imagination. Expectations and realities are quickly dissolved. The shift from one physically manipulated existence to another continually reshapes the city and spaces that I inhabit. Rapid change is a way of life here. It is the instability of Seoul that inspires me most.

Another evening meal in the local Korean soup house: an old man and his wife sit cross-legged on the floor under the cold glow of fluorescent lights. Each is slurping down spicy Tcheggae as if life has existed and will continue to exist unchanged in this small establishment without end. This small eatery appeared to me to be open briefly in the evening and noontime lunch hours for business. I typically paid little attention to this particular place as I tend to pass so many private establishments just like it. Adding the splash of color, light, and vibrancy that otherwise might be absent amidst mundane high-rise buildings, these are truly the places, however, that make Seoul what it is.

Walking past the same restaurant the following morning (as I had nearly every day for three months), I find to my astonishment a demolition crew removing the last of the debris from this once popular neighborhood eatery. Plumes of dust and smoke bellow from the gaping hole that just a moment ago was the front entry. No trace of the previous evening exists inside. Only the sun-bleached red and blue sign above the entry remains—one last fragment of a brief history.

SEOUL: PHOTO BY AUTHOR

PGS.14/15

Whether you call it art, Americana, or simply kitsch, the old Moon Winx Lodge sign, a local landmark, is still standing on State Route 215 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in all its neon glory.

STILL STANDING

Text and photo by Rick Stoddart

The sign was installed in 1957, during a decade that saw the rise of a new motor-driven culture—when Route 66 became a fixture in the American imagination. Better-designed roads and faster, more affordable cars begot moto-architecture: motels, motor courts and motor lodges. Other amenities, such as diners, roadside cabins and campsites sprang up alongside the fledging autobahn. These new roadside attractions took advantage of neon as a medium to advertise their wares, with great effect, to passing automobiles.

The Moon Winx sign designer, Alabama artist Glenn House Sr., now seventy-two, used whatever methods he could to flag down the passing motorists. The commission was an opportunity to experiment with an exotic new material in creating a representation for the clients: Day-Glo paint. "They had bright, brilliant colors—two colors of red, one a sort of an orange-red and the other a little bit purple-red," reminisces House, "There was a bright yellow and a bright green, and I think those were the four Day-Glo colors. I don't think they ever had Day-Glo blue or brown or grays or any of those colors. These colors would fluoresce in ultraviolet light…and it looked, on black illustration board, like a neon sign, in full flash in the dark of night. Pretty soon after that, the sign was blinking away out on a major highway."

By the 1970s, urban sprawl—requiring free-way corridors, highway overpasses, city loops and bypasses—had all but removed the motor architecture and motel signs of the 1950s from view. The on-ramps and off-ramps of the inter-state system offered only the codified signage of mass-marketed motel chains. The neon-crafted cowboys, bright and blinking sleep-walking bears, and the luminous high-diving ladies of the roadside motel signs disappeared. These neon icons became hidden alongside secondary routes, beside minor highways, and jumbled among declining urban centers.

But the Moon Winx sign stands much as it did in 1957. The rooms of the lodge are still open for rent, but the restaurant that was known in its time to serve travelers a good steak has long closed. The once wooded areas around the Moon Winx have given way to more houses and concrete. But the sign's winking eye still flirts with drivers as they pass by, a reminder of simpler times, flickering in fading neon.

xon, 2002

THE GARDEN IN THE MACHINE: THE PAINTINGS OF *BRIAN ALFRED*

BY *DARRIN ALFRED*

AT FIRST GLANCE, it's an ordinary commercial greenhouse, a purely functional assemblage of glass and steel. The image contains an ample quantity of light and space—a unique incorporation of horticultural necessity into industrial form. On closer examination, however, something in this tranquil and hermetic environment seems slightly ominous. The space is eerily absent of any human occupation. Trees, shrubs, and less recognizable forms of vegetation emerge from the floor's pristine surface to form highly uniform rows of vibrant greenery. Hovering above the foliage, a rigorous matrix of lighting and irrigation fixtures asserts superiority over the apparently helpless plant material below.

The outside world is masked from view, rendered nonexistent by the frosted glass that encloses the structure. The strict one-point perspective of the rendering draws our eyes to a single object in the distance, an exhaust fan mounted on the far wall. This device seems as ready to extract us from the greenhouse as it does the impurities in the air. Like so many of Brian Alfred's paintings, *Monsanto,* 2001, is marked by an unusual delicacy and by an awkward tension, the result of two apparently opposing forces: nature and technology.

Monsanto: the title is itself a clue to the contradictory messages of this painting. Headquartered just outside St. Louis, Missouri, the Monsanto Chemical Company was founded in 1901. Monsanto's products, including herbicides, genetically engineered foods, and artificial sweeteners, have been the focus of public controversy for many years. Recent high-profile advertisements depict the company as a visionary force working to bring state-of-the-art science and environmentally responsible solutions to humanity's pressing problems. Are you concerned about population growth, the future of agriculture or the quality of our food? Monsanto, we are assured, will find the answers.

Alfred's canvases capture this ambivalence. In his stylized portrayals of the built environment the natural and the man-made interact with humor, naiveté, and above all, subtlety. Nature and technology, forces too massive and complex to be purely good or evil, make their appearances in his paintings as simultaneous purveyors of devastation and beauty, apprehension and ease.

"One could definitely see an Exxon sign in the middle of a forest as an eyesore," the painter says, referring to another of his mysterious and seemingly incongruous images. "On the other hand, if you were driving through the middle of nowhere and running out of gas, it might be the best thing you've ever seen."

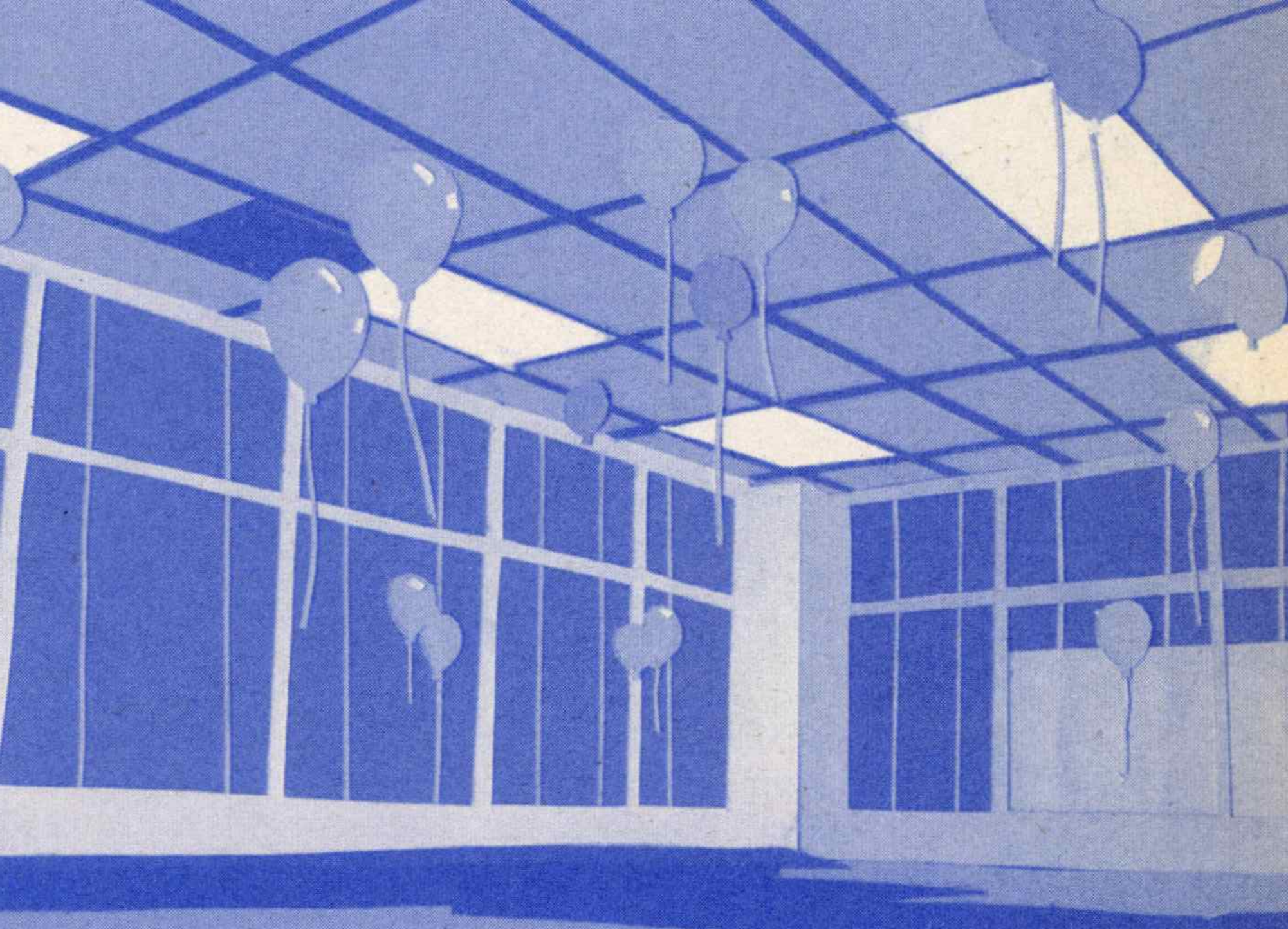
Alfred borrows his imagery from the internet, television, news and advertising media, and his own imagination. Employing Photoshop and Illustrator in the same manner as he engages pencil, tape, or paintbrush, he adjusts and manipulates these images on the computer, sometimes combining multiple views. The images are transferred to large canvases and painted in a softly colored but hard-edged style. The resulting scenes, familiar but subtly altered, playful but somehow solemn, are ultimately disturbing in their presentation of a manipulated reality.

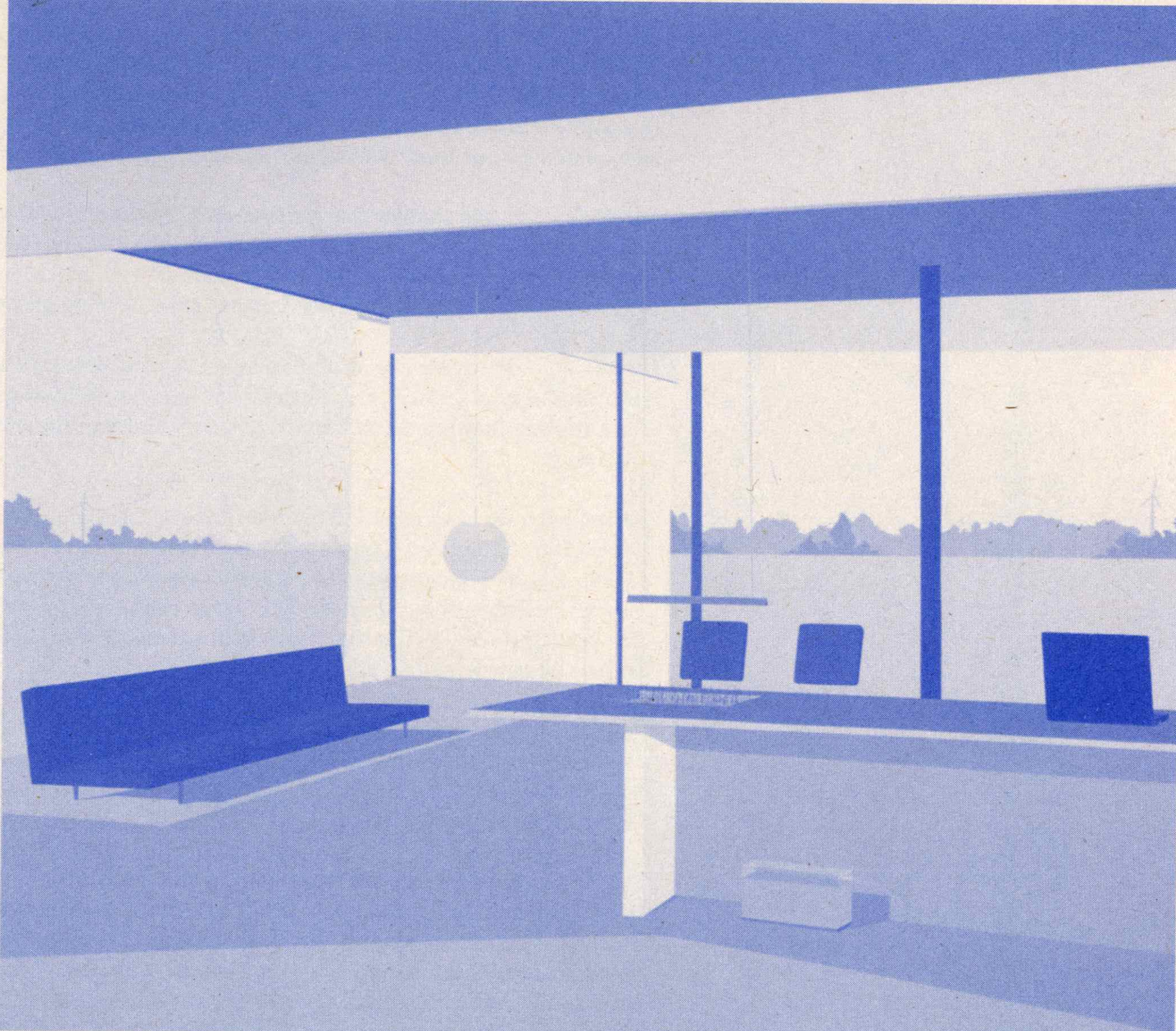
A truck crosses a freeway overpass, unknowingly littering the landscape with paper. A row of wind turbines dots the horizon like majestic redwoods, casting long shadows as the sun sets. A scattering of helium balloons drifts listlessly under the dull fluorescent lights of an empty office. A cool modernist living room lies eerily empty.

Shipwrecked within the desert landscape that surrounds it, the home depicted in this last painting, *Desert House*, 2001, occupies a world in which nature has apparently been thoroughly subjugated. Surrounded by an expanse of glass, the interior is filled with light, yet feels cold and somewhat clinical. A small tank of fragile vegetation sits on the countertop, connected to what looks like hydroponics equipment. Perhaps controlled by the laptop sitting nearby, the machinery may be supporting the only source of food .There is an overwhelming feeling of a presence that is no longer visible. Has someone just stepped out? Or perhaps they lie hidden behind the counter, unconscious or dead due to a shortage of food and water. This too-cleanly rendered interior, despite its calm, inspires paranoia.

Alfred's paintings evoke a sensation described by architectural historian Anthony Vidler as the "architectural uncanny"—built spaces that are unsettling or threatening. This sensation comes in part from the recognition that architectural spaces are not neutral, that the built environment is the setting for innumerable personal and collective narratives. Alfred's paintings depict a single moment, one point of shared experience, hovering between chaos and control. It is never obvious whether it is nature or technology that will send the story careening in one direction or the other. But ultimately, these images question modernity's unrestrained quest for technological and economical power, and transform the ordinary stories that lie embedded in the built environment into larger-than-life epics.

all images courtesy of
Max Protetch Gallery,
New York





Janet Cardiff,
House Burning, 2001

Architect/architect

by Julie Kim

All Master of Architecture applicants must include a Statement of Purpose. This should be a one-page essay including purpose for entering the M. Arch program, career goals, and proposed emphasis of studies and special interest in the field. Statements should be clear and focused.

Physics remains on the coffee table, abandoned. Two-dimensional kinematics, rotational motion: ignored. In college I learned how to think critically and generate ideas. A liberal arts degree enables me to answer questions with more questions. But this is physics, a field that strives to eradicate the existence of eternal questions. That thought alone is incapacitating.

On the other hand, my Statement of Purpose for my M. Arch program is well underway—though it mostly skirts the issue of me and only vaguely alludes to any "proposed emphasis of study." Instead, it speaks entirely of Janet Cardiff, the Canadian video artist, as a source of influence. The Statement is a thousand words over the limit. For the time being, and relative to a set of half-done physics problems, I'll call that success.

Two days later, and fifty physics problems underwater, I make a list.

My Statement of Purpose is:

A. Too Long (obvious)
B. Totally Evasive (typical)
C. A and B (yes yes yes, I know I know I know)
D. A and B and Not Even About an Architect or Architecture

D induces panic. D is a problem. This is architecture school I am applying to! "Statement of Purpose" implies that I should have something to state, moreover a purpose in doing so; it implies doing something more pointed than rambling on about my favorite artist. How to frame a discussion of Cardiff's work poses the real challenge—how to venture beyond the obvious and avoid creating something of the I-want-to-walk-on-the-moon-because-of-Neil-Armstrong typology.

I make a new list.

Sunday—TO DO:

1. Define the Obvious (5 min.)
2. Move Beyond It (15 min.—maybe more?)
3. Define the Neil Armstrong Typology (2 min.)
4. Move Beyond That (15 more min.)
5. Finish Physics (time remaining)

1. Architecture recurs as subject, setting, and theme in much of Cardiff's work. [1a: as subject] *In House Burning*, 2001, a documentary-ish portrayal of a house ablaze, architecture (the spectacle of watching it burn) is, literally, the subject. Is it arson? Pyromania? A grand experiment or art project? [1b: as setting] Cardiff's *Walks*, the artist's best-known works, are site-specific "tours" through the architectural spaces for which they are made. While listening to a CD Walkman or watching the screen of a digital camcorder, visitors make their way along a predetermined route, heeding the artist's direction [when to walk, when to stop, where to look, what to think] at every turn.

[1c. as theme] *Forty-Part Motet*, an audio installation shown at the artist's 2001 retrospective at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center in New York, depends largely on the strategic configuration of objects in a three-dimensional field. A choral hymn, composed in 1575 by Thomas Tallis for Queen Elizabeth I, is broadcast over forty person-high speakers arranged in a large circle. Each voice of the forty-part hymn is recorded on a single track and broadcast over each of the speakers. At points near the circumference, the individual voice dominates the collective and volume increases or decreases proportionally as one moves towards or away from any given speaker. At the center of the circle, where the sound is perfectly balanced, individual strains are no longer decipherable.

2. Janet Cardiff, though most widely regarded as an artist, is also an architect. Not an Architect [big "A"/underline] but an architect [small "A"/no underline]. Cardiff is a constructor of situations—of physical relationships between the body and its surroundings and, subsequently, of psychological connections between the mind and place. Cardiff is an architect of experience.

[2a: moving …] We are able to perceive our relationship to our environment via our senses of sight, smell, sound, and touch; the senses are antennae through which we receive the signals being transmitted to us and the means by which this information is processed. Through the sensations elicited by Cardiff's architecture, bodily associations with place are forged. These associations make situations of events, experiences of visits—memories that serve as the foundation for meaning. With no connection to our surroundings, we are merely objects in space—moving, perhaps, but hardly animate.

Should this not also be the focus for practicing Architects [big "A"/underline]—to be architects [small "A"/no underline]? [2b: moving …] As a society, we can do without more architecture as a manifestation of ego, of childhood dreams to build something "big," or of private commercial interests. Our current condition is one that yearns for instruction on how to deal with excess, navigation away from commodity, and direction toward meaning.

3. "I once saw a picture in my U.S. history textbook of Neil Armstrong: On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong took a step out of the Apollo 11 lunar craft onto the moon. This giant leap for mankind made Armstrong the first man to walk on the moon. I have always admired Neil Armstrong. I, too, want to walk on the moon."

4. The profession of architecture could use a break from its egocentric self, from its hard ties to building. More than the additional creation of material substance, we need direction—and at a scale that is comprehensible. This is where an Architect planning ten million square feet of commercial and retail space can learn from Janet Cardiff, the architect. Individuals are minute relative to the landscapes that we inhabit. As the built environment grows more vast, the proportions of the body, in comparison, become increasingly small. Relationships to our surroundings are thus more difficult to understand, associations harder to come by, and meaning near extinction. [4a: GONE …] Architects can learn from architects how to intervene responsibly: that is, how to design with due attention to human behavior, psychology, and sensory perception. It is through these veins that we are able to experience richness and meaning in our built environment.

5. (10 pts) A projectile is fired 100m from the base of a 15m high wall with an initial speed of 34.5m/s at an angle q above the horizontal. Find the smallest angle q1 and the biggest angle q2 at which the projectile fired will pass over the wall. Write all your work into your blue book. Show work as clearly as possible. Box or underline your answers.

q1 = 41.49
q2 = 57.04

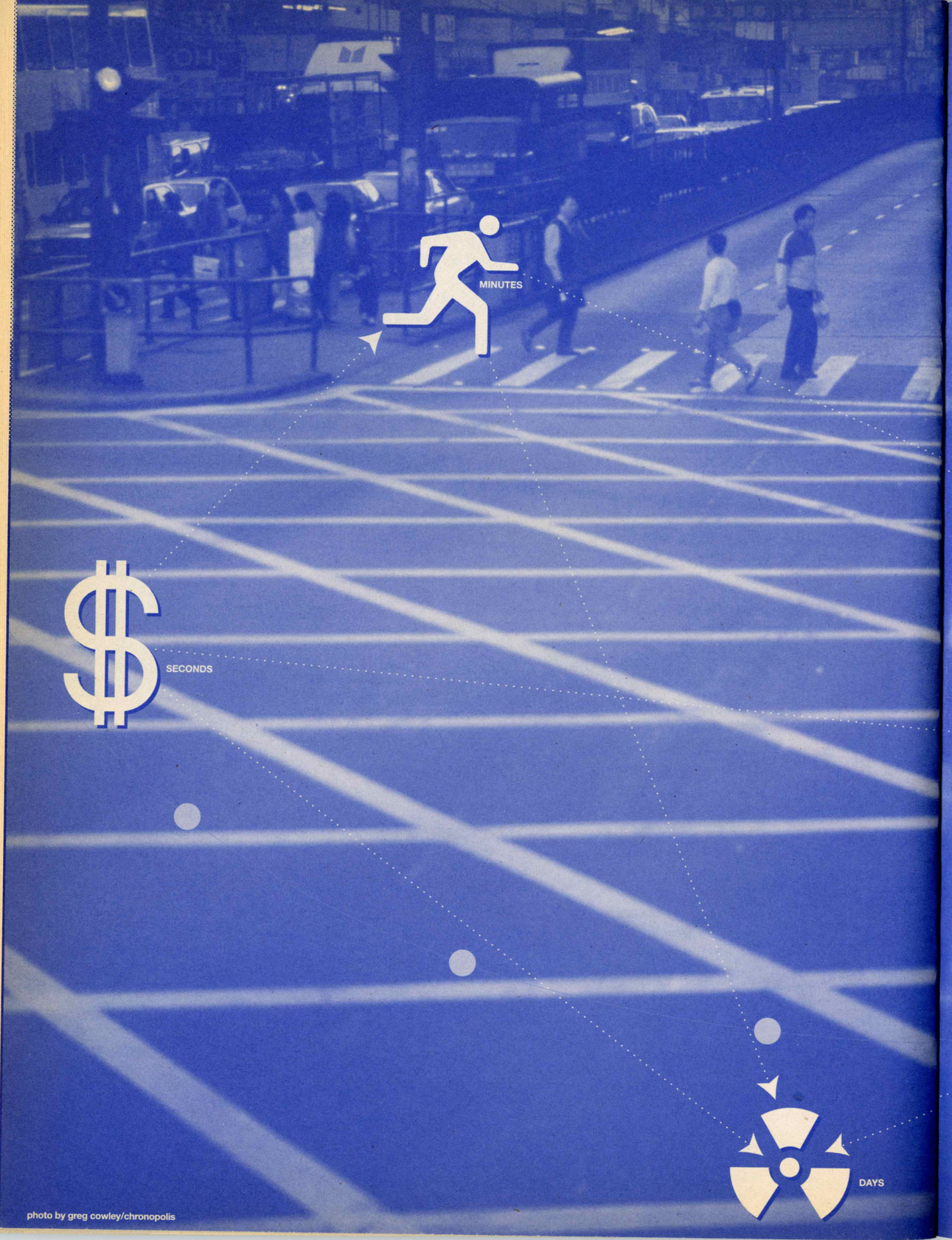


photo by greg cowley/chronopolis

1. we await the time—the moment—the signal to enter

2. we mechanically cross the space-a moment that has been framed

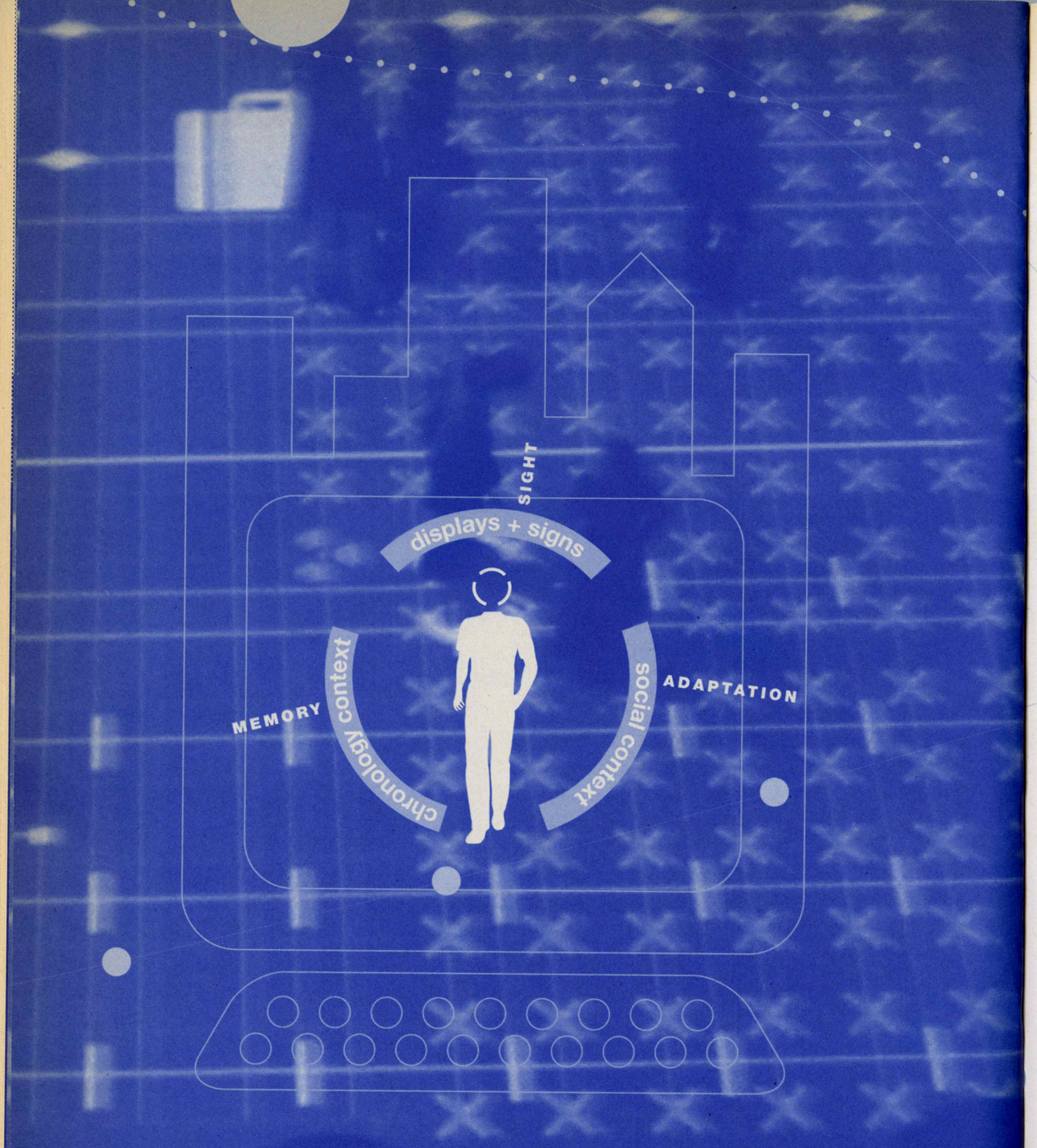
3. we move quickly, in random formations with increased acceleration

4. the space is reframed (or is it?)—we exit (or do we?)

CHRONOPOLIS: INHABITING TIME

www.chronopolis.org

Chris Salter_TEXT ESSAY
Erik Adigard_VISUAL ESSAY



currencies vs history
human body vs automation
mass production vs obsolescence
decay vs infinity

SPHERE OF INTERPRETATION:
perspective is no longer centered on space
it is at once centered on interfaces,
community and time

immediacy & permanence
permanence & mobility

"The advent of the computer in our laboratories and studios has certainly made the shape and form of time amenable to human manipulation and intuition in a way that has not been the case within rational disciplines since the dawn of the modern era."_Sanford Kwinter, *Architectures of Time*

What role will digital media and computation play in defining what a future architecture might be, how it will look, sound and feel and perhaps most importantly, be experienced? This is not an inappropriate question considering architecture's incessant quest for other disciplines (from film theory to dance and cooking) to "scaffold it," as Roger Connah writes in his ironically titled book *How Architecture Got its Hump*. Yet, media's interference with architecture began long before the current historical moment. Already in post-World War II, pre PC times, Constant's utopian vision of New Babylon imagined an architecture of endlessly shifting environments, renewed and varied by "technical implements." Xenakis and Le Corbusier's Phillips Pavilion for the 1958 Brussel's World's Fair radically predicted the coming fusion of electronics, sound, image and built space materialized into a veritable urban gesamtkunstwerk.

Perhaps more recently though, in the excess of the late 1980's and 1990's architecture was thought to be completely reborn as digital computation enabled the warping and distending of a reviled Cartesian space, at least on the screen. At one extreme, architecture was reduced to an incessant readout of numbers, coordinates, lines and points, as ground plans and elevations nested inside the GUI windows of 3-D modeling software were transformed into data. In its avant-garde other, it became a festering, bio-mimetic organi-tech mutation, seeping from the mind and re-emerging on the screen as a world of fantastic representations in the process of eternal becoming; the n-dimensional zones of Marcos Novak's trans-architectures, for example. Through the exemplary "information architectures" of such projects as MVRDV's *Datatown* (a city composed entirely of data that has "no topologies or prescribed ideologies") and Asymptote's *Virtual NYSE* (perhaps prophetic in its visualization and capturing of market ephemerality), bricks and mortar were rendered into binary representation. Architecture finally finished its long journey from the built to the symbolic.

Immersed within these architectural universes of data and representation, however, can we not help but feel a strange sense of simultaneous deja-vu and loss? While there is the sneaking suspicion of "having been here before" as info-driven architecture tramples over the well-trodden ground of scientific data visualization, there is also the haunting sense that we have been left lodged in a space of disembodiment–a hermetic, clean room of a realm devoid of human experience. Is it possible that these architectures of information remain largely stuck in a realm that, as Connah suggests co-opts the surface of the screen but forgets the scene? "Understanding the differences between scene and screen could produce differing, improbable, even performative, architectures."

Shifting from architectures of information to performative architectures could imply spaces, actions and events *enacted* in and embodied by time itself. Space itself becomes malleable to our perception, behaving and responding in the grey zone between the real time landscape of the machine and the open, rich physical world. Time is no longer used as a technique; a tool for generating visual representations that are ultimately frozen into sculptural forms inserted into our predominantly Euclidean landscape. Even within the earliest analog performative architectures (for example, Chinese cities that functioned as large-scale sundials where the interaction between sunlight and shadows and the built environment provided the clocking of day and night), time functioned as material form. Architecture once again is invaded by media, becoming a *time-based* art.

Andrei Tarkovksy once wrote that the Japanese master time as the stuff of art. Could we entertain the radical notion that what the

computer really provides architecture is not the stuff of information but the stuff of time? Could the so-called users or participants in architecture inhabit not simply a space of visualized numerics and extruded blobs but time itself? "What is it about time's relentless fluidity, Sanford Kwinter writes, in *Architectures of Time*, "its irreducible materiality, that the modern mind finds so impossible-or repellant-to think?"

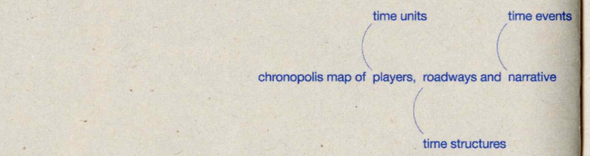
Designing for time is the catch phrase that scaffolds both the concept and subsequent realization of *Chronopolis*. Armed with a host of disciplinary interferences (graphic and interactive media design, branding, computer music, performance, the design of responsive, computer-augmented environments), we aimed to create a temporal architecture; a space where time performs and responds according to human presence inhabiting its periphery and center.

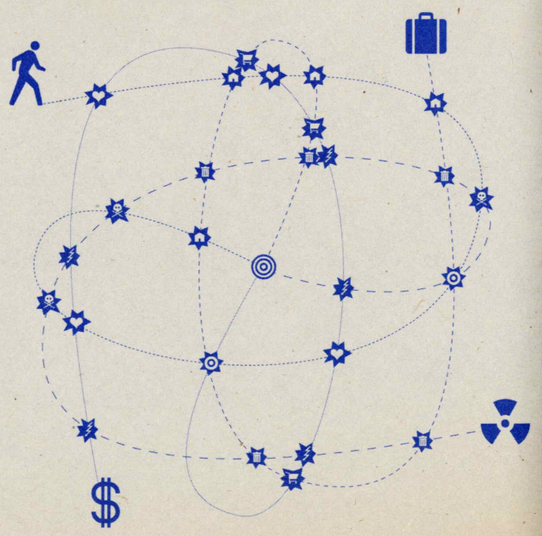
Chronopolis' architecture, at first, appears to lie in the realm of the display. The screen, blown out of proportion and re-projected onto the surface of the physical world at 30 x 30' is seen from a distance as urban signage in motion, a calendar, and, intentionally but perhaps somewhat mysteriously, a clock. Yet, as its name invokes, *Chronopolis* is a city constructed of time where flows of commerce, pedestrians, commodities and decay/transformation itself are rendered into icons and organized over 4 standardized time grids of 60 seconds, 60 minutes, 24 hours and 365 days. The time units of seconds, minutes, hours and days repeatedly travel over *Chronopolis*' surface, these animated icons moved by the flow of real time leaving a trail of dots behind in their wake.

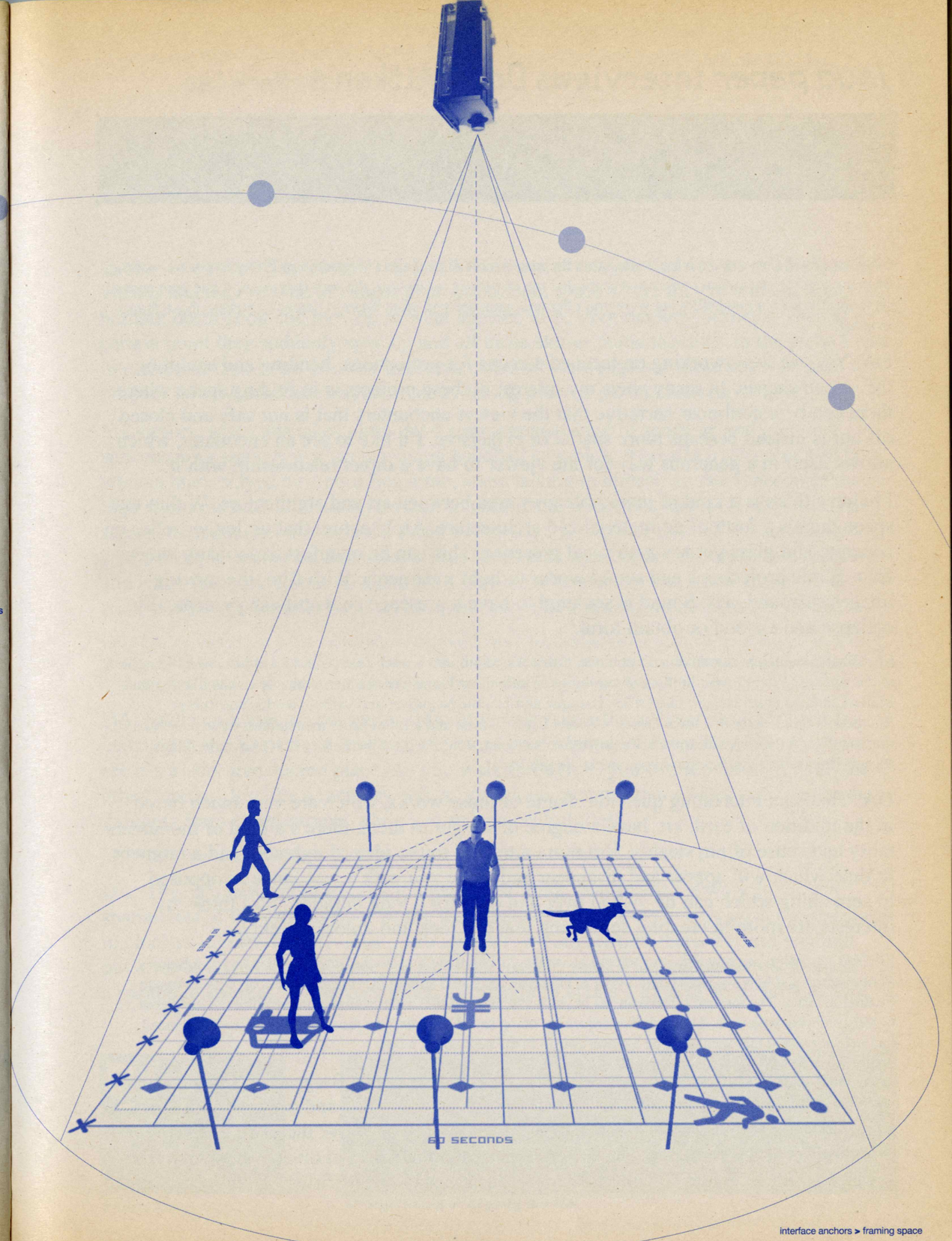
Stepping into *Chronopolis*, however, the experience shifts. The display, the stable point of reference gives way as we suddenly *inhabit* a strange visual, spatial and sonic architecture of grids and pictograms perpetually in motion. With the image traveling below our feet and time's incessant motion sounding and enveloping us above and around from a battery of parabolic loudspeakers, the screen and scene begin to merge. Time's inevitable passage becomes *felt* for *Chronopolis*' inhabitants; *palpable* and *dense*.

From the outside, *Chronopolis*' digitized display suggests its interface-the mechanism which hides the thorny complexity of the computational machinery lying below its surface while acting as an affordance for the revelation of that hidden depth. The interface normally dictates the form and frame of interaction-the screen's surface revealing what Paul Virilio called its "interactive depth." *Chronopolis*' real time clock of urban signs in motion suggests a semantic mechanism for navigating the city-a city that from the periphery appears to be reduced to the flattened space of the desktop. Yet from inside the environment, it is the steady build-up of human presence that ultimately opens up the space of revelation. Walking, touching, jumping on and interacting with *Chronopolis*' fleeting, projected surface does not trigger or reveal Virilio's interactive depths. Rather, it only through the visitors' inhabiting and populating of *Chronopolis*' does the system respond to the presence of bodies and perform its own temporal transformation towards acceleration. As the population rises, time is smeared and our experience of it as a discrete series of instants gradually succumbs to an accelerated continuum without beginning or end. Space itself becomes the interface to time.

"Only when you break away from the spell of time as a sequence of instants one can measure by the clock," wrote the late Chilean neurobiologist Francisco Varela, "and you come back to your own depth of experience can you realize that what you live in right now is almost like a cloud, like a whole, like a span, like a flash, which is far from a dot. The now is like an enormous matrix from which you can grow the quality of who you are." *Chronopolis*' fragile attempt to materialize time might be one small direction for performative architecture's mediated future dance between the thickets of computation and the physical world. For after all, is it not the case that to feel time's passing in the sinew and cavities of the body is to transport the inhabitants of such an architecture back into the world of the living, moving us from a cloud of data to a cloud of experience?







interface anchors > framing space

loud paper interviews Doug Aitken By Mark Gee

LP: Last time I saw you we were working on the installation at the Fabric Workshop in Philly. We were working on some amorphous screen shapes that reminded me of protein molecules, the way they twisted and bent around on themselves. In a nutshell, what were you after and what are you after, when it comes to putting these things in space?

DA: Yes, we were working on torqued screens for projections, bending and sculpting the screen shapes. In many ways my interest in these projects is in finding space where there can be a nonlinear narrative that the viewer encounters that is not safe and closed off but is instead perhaps more spatial or expansive. I'd like to see an encounter, which allows itself in a generous way for the viewer to have a direct relationship with it.

I believe there is a kind of incredible grey area between art and architecture. Within that space there's a form of de-materialized architecture. Architecture that no longer relies on concrete and glass yet has a physical presence. This can be manifest in so many ways: from filmic projections and sound works to light treatments. With film, the moving images surround you. Sound is sculpted to have a presence so that it can perceptually collapse and expand or obtain form.

LP: What about when narrative isn't obvious, when it's coded into a work really subtly and not available right at the surface? When I was thinking about things to talk about I considered other works by artists like Gordon Matta-Clark, Michael Heizer, like Office Baroque and Double Negative, and various works like Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty or James Turrell's Roden Crater. These and a lot of other installations have their own stories to tell, and their spatial aspects are powerful, but quiet, voices within them; they don't have the filmic aspect. How would you compare your spatial sensibility?

DA: That's an interesting question. Some of those works, which are very much based in the tradition of earth art, have a degree of weight to them, there's a kind of monumentality and sense of physicality. I'm more attracted to the idea of lightness and a moment in time which will appear and disappear and leave you with a resonance as opposed to something which can be visited over and over for a long duration. So I think my interests are more in creating something that can lock and unlock quickly.

LP: You see that in the way that your screens are made. I'm thinking back to the Serpentine Gallery exhibition of new ocean and how we were really trying to eliminate the frame around the image and end up with an image floating in space. The torqued screens are an obvious extension of that, an experiment in breaking the image out of the usual planar screens. Although the torques are being saved for later, you recently installed another piece I had helped on, and that seemed to be a closer cousin to the new ocean work.

DA: Interiors, the piece at Fabric Workshop and at Kunsthaus Bregenz, is a work where there's a series of translucent screens that the viewer can move and walk around. On multiple screens there are different stories, in each story/narrative there are different protagonists. They're in radically different places in the world in diverse situations from perhaps an urban ghetto in Tokyo—where you find auctioneers firing off linguistics in the street—to empty office complexes. In all these narratives you find stories of single individuals and they're kind of caught in an in-between space where they're without home and without destination and moving in what appears to be very random journeys. Then at a certain point they suddenly sync up and all these stories come together. In the piece I was interested in the notion of order in chaos, trying to weld together these key moments in random time where there's synchronicity taking place, a perfect locking of time.

In interiors, when this takes place, all the protagonists kind of speed up and go into a subconscious state. A woman is playing handball so rapidly it creates a tempo of 120 bpm while a man, played by Andre Benjamin, starts talking to himself so fast it becomes this high speed rap and all these layers start to unfold and create this larger composition. Each screen, each channel is a separate audio but they come together through synchronicity to create a single connected audioscape, then they break apart again; the characters separate, and when the work comes up again it's a new set of characters and a new cycle. So it continuously reassembles itself and continuously offers a new variation to the viewer.

LP: There was variation in the studio where the four screens were displayed in a symmetrical layout. How does the content relate to the formal aspect of the work, the arrangement of the pieces and how it relates to the idea of chaos, and how it's played out or not, in the spatial and formal arrangement of the pieces?

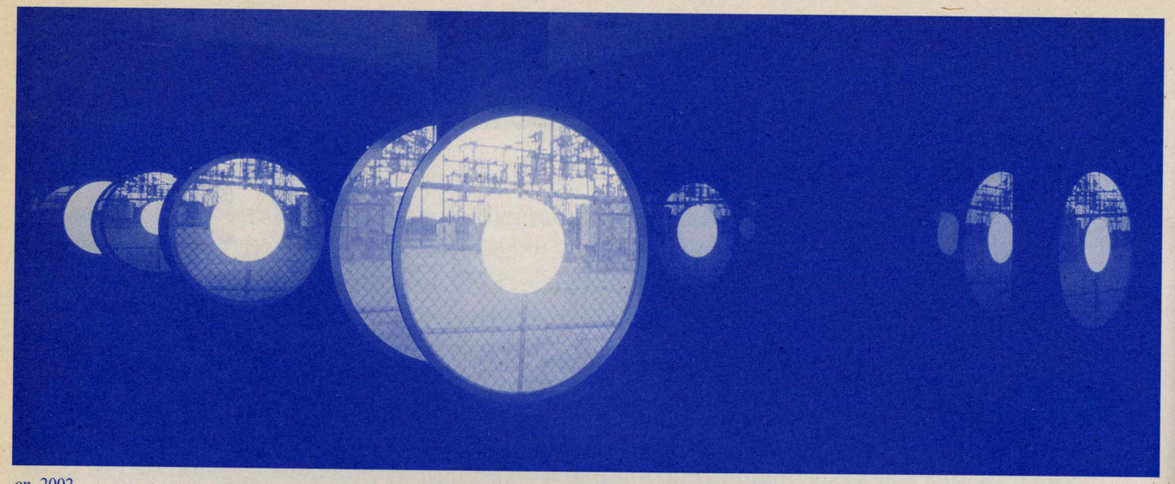
DA: [pulls up image on computer from http://www.kunsthaus-bregenz.at/] Here it is installed at the Kunsthaus Bregenz, the museum designed by Peter Zumthor. As you can see it's a very translucent piece. As you walk through it, you can see through to all the other screens. It's like a memory cell, a crystalline memory that allows you to see other thoughts from other corners while you're in a central idea.

LP: What's going on over there [points to another image on the computer screen]?

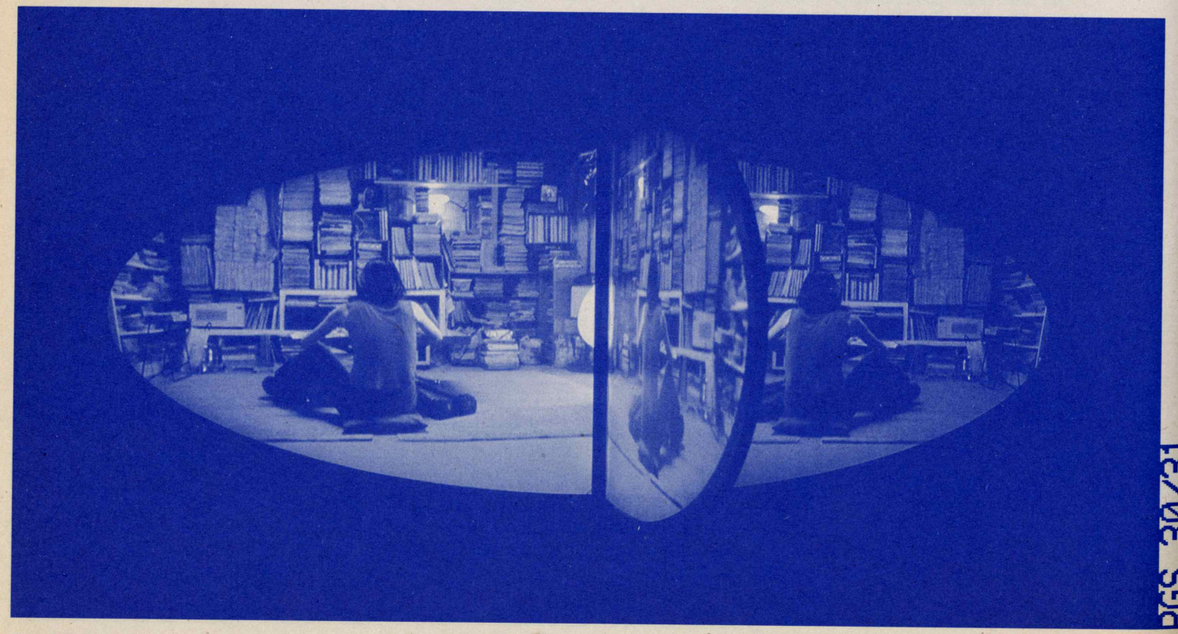
DA: This is a new audio installation titled you think, you are. It's a work in a large spatial area at the ground floor of the Kunsthaus. The museum is very austere, especially the lobby—almost too precious. I brought in raw construction materials and we built out a series of platforms. Some are ring-like, twelve total. Floating above each one is a parabolic speaker. It was very much an attempt to create a kind of sonic architecture.

Interiors, 2002

All images courtesy of 303 gallery, New York

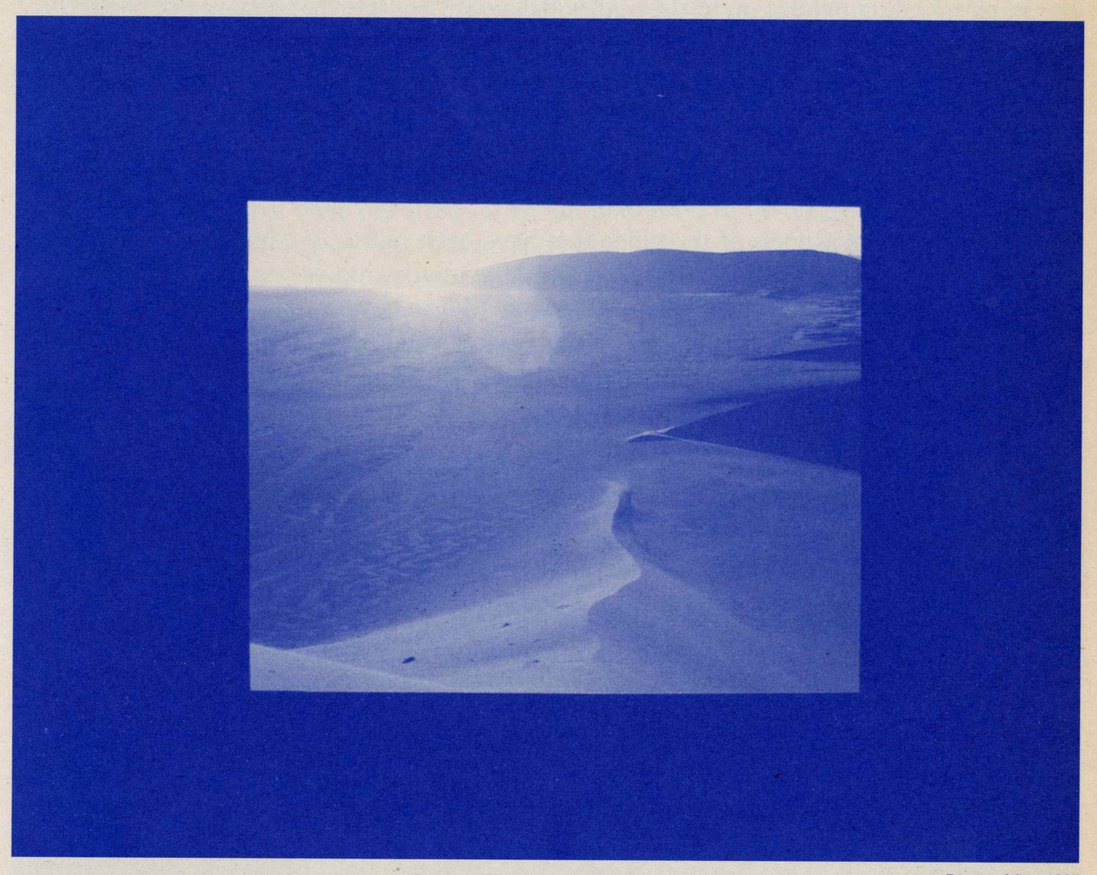


on, 2002



New Skin, 2002

PGS. 30/31



Diamond Sea, 1997

The parabolic creates a kind of force field of audio. The piece consists of twelve discrete channels synchronized, all the sound of breathing, but the breathing begins to change and transforms on each exhale into the sound of a larger and larger audience, eventually reaching levels of peak hysteria, as if one very gentle breath when exhaled were 500,000 people. So it's a strange piece. Visually, the architectural treatment was key to it; I wanted it to be very minimal. I had a translucent scrim dyed a warm earth tone that transforms all the incoming light. It gives it a subtle, humanistic feel.

LP: About the transformation of the new ocean pieces, from the Serpentine to the Kunsthaus: originally new ocean had a real sense of procession, or progression, at least for me. It calls to mind Le Corbusier's promenade architecturale, where there's a journey one takes, a kind of scripted journey designed into the experience of

the space. It was pretty theatrical that way, and even dramatic, the way we completely changed the normal circulation of the building. You've got thaw and new ocean cycle installed at the Kunsthaus and I see that thaw has been really transformed. It looks like it's been doubled or reflected.

DA: The exhibition new ocean, at the end of the day will travel to four different locations, four cities. I wanted to create an exhibition that constantly changed, that was not a traveling exhibition in the traditional sense, but one that metamorphosized. I wanted it remixed over and over. Perhaps the show you see in London and Torino are completely different shows. It's been an experiment, on a personal level, to stimulate the idea of what an exhibition is and how it can manifest itself. These ideas of change, transformation, nomadicism are central to the structure for new ocean.

LP: You even re-edited the video for the Kunsthaus?

DA: Yeah, there are aspects of the video that have been radically edited or other things where the sound has changed or been lost. Architecturally, rooms just completely mutate. I see it almost as sand – like sand, I wanted it to have a kind of warm, visceral feeling when it's held in your hand, but I'm also interested in seeing how it falls through the cracks in your fingers.

The things which I value most as a viewer, whether it's a good movie or a book or anything, is something which cannot be held onto; something which has a resonance that remains with me, that questions me, but which is not necessarily tangible.

LP: Do you think you have more opportunities to form that resonance using the film versus using the actual installation and physical make-32up and spatial arrangement?

DA: Not necessarily. I mean you look at each side as a blank canvas. The works can change. The works do change. Like the work thaw, at one moment it was in a subterranean basement and then it becomes something completely different at the next location.

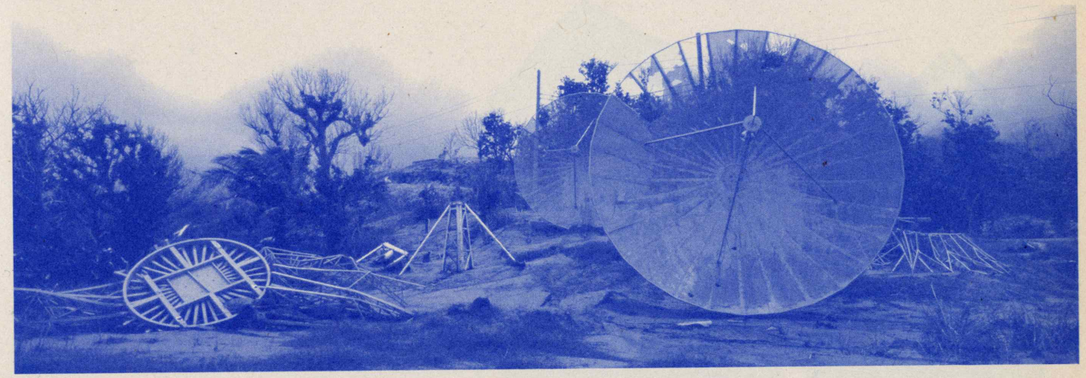
LP: But the ephemeral, intangible qualities are much more a product of the film. I'd say the film is the major communicator for your purposes. We can make translucent screens that help to defy solid space, or solid form, but without the films they just sit there.

DA: There are definitely architectural sites that have a tremendous amount of resonance, sometimes due to historical interventions or historical infusions of events which have occurred. Some, like the Salk Institute, have their own kind of existential beauty. I think it's more the notion that ideas can be at the core, and ideas and concepts can stimulate response, but it's often not possible to specifically guide what that response will be. I think the only machine in which our society has perfected the manipulation of responses is Hollywood feature filmmaking.

LP: Yeah, Spielberg.

DA: Precisely. As when there's a film which might be stupid, and the story is so bad you laugh at it, but sitting on an airplane flying across the Midwest, alone in your seat, forced to watch this thing, your resistance and your criticality break down. You find yourself crying precisely because the recipe is perfected. So it's very much context. The new blueprint of the gallery in the twentieth century was the white cube. Running simultaneously was the invention of the black box, which was the cinema. I think of them being designed as force fields to manipulate the viewer into focusing on something in a world becoming increasingly chaotic. The blueprint of the salon-style hanging of exhibition went out of favor in the early twentieth century. It's almost now that architecture has taken on the role of creating blinders or aiding and abetting in the act of focusing the viewer. It's something I'm interested in. I don't necessarily believe in all the manifestations that have occurred—I'm not interested in IMAX, I'm not interested in being overwhelmed by a sixty-foot screen because it's usually pretty boring. I want something more than to just be stimulated on a retinal level. A lot of what the work that I'm attempting to make, or experimenting with, searches towards a different kind of blueprint for perception, a different way of putting the collage which surrounds us together in a way which doesn't have to rely on the tradition of linear narrative. Instead it addresses the expansiveness of living rather than trying to condense it and make sense of it in a small sound bite.

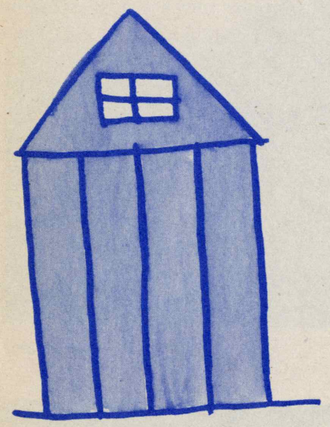
Much of my work is invested in the theory of finding a kind of idea-architecture that is immediate and ephemeral. Where the ideas of content, perception and viewing collide. Creating ideas as something that can be walked through instead of just thought about, or that there can be a physicality to a concept. I think seeing these as a definition of a new form of architecture is kind of important.



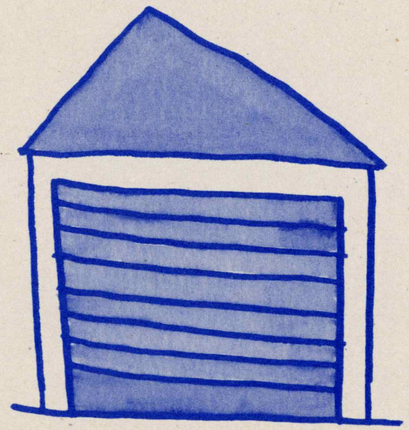
Eraser, 2002

artwork by:

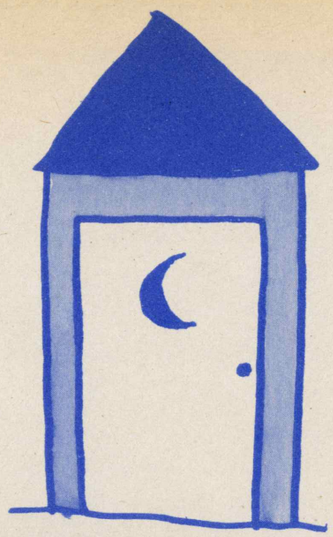
TUCKER NICHOLS



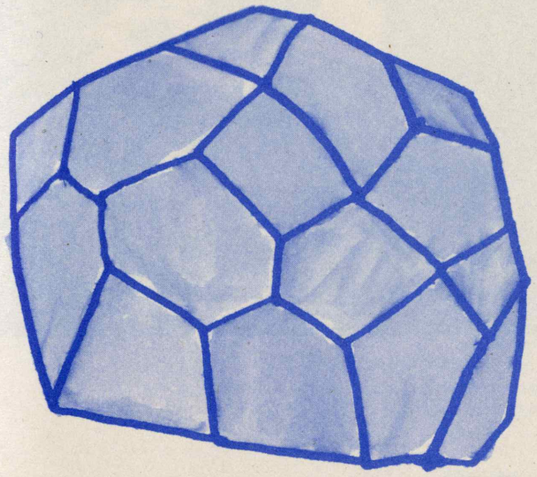
(SHED)



(STORAGE)



(OUT HOUSE)



WELCOME

transgressive architecture

text and photography by gil m. doron

Bad Sheets installation, 2001, Trafalgar Square

I. public sex

On March 29, 2001, an article in London's Evening Standard carried the headline "Sex has its place in public: Lord Rogers." The article stated, "Architect Lord Rogers has said he supports streets and public squares being used by prostitutes, beggars and rough sleepers. [Rogers] told a packed lecture at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) that he defended the rights of buskers, vendors and 'participants in public sex' to use London's public places."

Rogers made his provocative remarks in response to a question I asked him, as a member and founder of the activist group, Transgressive Architecture. Our group staged a protest that night at the lecture, to focus attention on the silence of the architectural establishment in response to new government policies on the use of public space. With our intervention, an installation outside the lecture hall, we sought to defend the rights of the homeless and other urban nomads and to highlight their contribution to the livelihood of the city.

Transgressive Architecture was founded as a think tank and creative team to reassess the role and design of public space. The group's philosophy associates the activities of nomads with Michel Foucault's definition of transgression, i.e. actions that are based on temporality, on testing limits, and on opening up boundaries. Transgression, according to Foucault, is not revolution or resistance. It does not endeavour to create a new system. Urban nomads do not produce or delimit space; rather, they de-territorialize it.

We chose Rogers' lecture because at the time he was the head of the government's Urban Task Force (UTF). The UTF published a tract in 1999, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, which argued that only middle-class leisure activities were appropriate for the city's public spaces. This publication, in advocating a policy of social cleansing, sanctioned bigotry on the part of London authorities. Since we thought it unlikely that these issues would be discussed at his lecture, or ever within the walls of RIBA, we used our intervention to open an alternative space for debate.

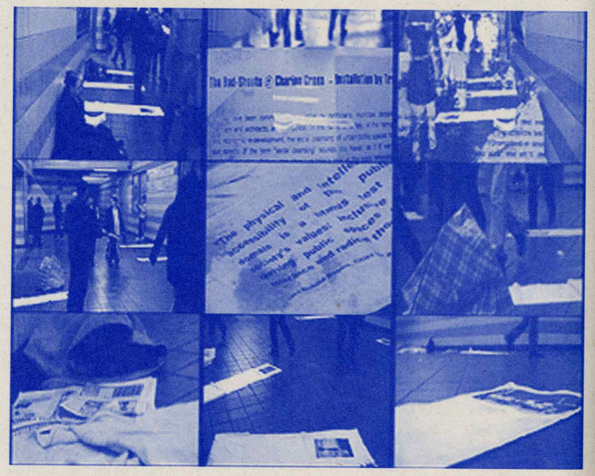
The installation consisted of seven bed sheets, laid out on the pavement directly in the path of visitors to the lecture, suspending movement and mobility in the public space. Marked with what resembled blood stains, one particular sheet was printed with a quote from Rogers' book *Cities for a Small Planet*:

"The physical and intellectual accessibility of the public domain is a litmus test of society's values: inclusive and thriving public spaces foster tolerance and radical thought."

The sheet picked up its ghoulish splotches a few months earlier; during a Transgressive Architecture exhibition at a local architecture school, we had graffitied a wall of the school with the same Rogers quote. When asked to remove the red paint, we used the sheet in protest.

The other six sheets were printed with photos of homeless people, prostitutes, street vendors, skateboarders, and other urban nomads. On the back side of the sheets, invisible to spectators, were the codes and colours of a city planner's zoning map. The photos were intended to be stains as well, evidence of activities in the city that cannot be coded or zoned. These are activities carried out in improper places: commercial activity on the sidewalk instead of a shop; sex in a park instead of at home; dancing in an abandoned warehouse instead of a regulated club; or placing bed sheets in a public thoroughfare. These activities, identity performances, survival tactics, deviancies, continually redesign the public space in an ephemeral way.

Stills from the film *The Bad Sheets*, 2001, Trafalgar Square



The Bad Sheets, 2001, Charing Cross underpass

II. social cleansing

In London's political system, and elsewhere, urban nomads do not have representation in the city. Inhabitants of officially recognised residential communities are the only ones who can vote and elect their local politicians. This is one reason why politicians have ignored the needs of urban nomads and initiated their eviction from public spaces. The most infamous advocate of social cleansing is former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani, with his zero-tolerance approach. In the past few years, some of London's local authorities have taken the same stand, instigating similar campaigns in a number of neighborhoods. For example, the Kings Cross area, traditionally used by homeless people and prostitutes, acquired a new urban plan and was "cleaned up" by the police. Homeless people and vendors were evicted from Charing Cross Station underpass, despite it being one of the safest places for them to sleep. Russell Square, used for centuries for sex cruising, was redesigned and closed at night. Leicester Square, like Times Square in New York, was re-planned with a view to transforming it into a "happy family zone," as one of the local politicians announced. This plan targeted prostitutes, beggars, homeless people and street vendors for eviction from the square.

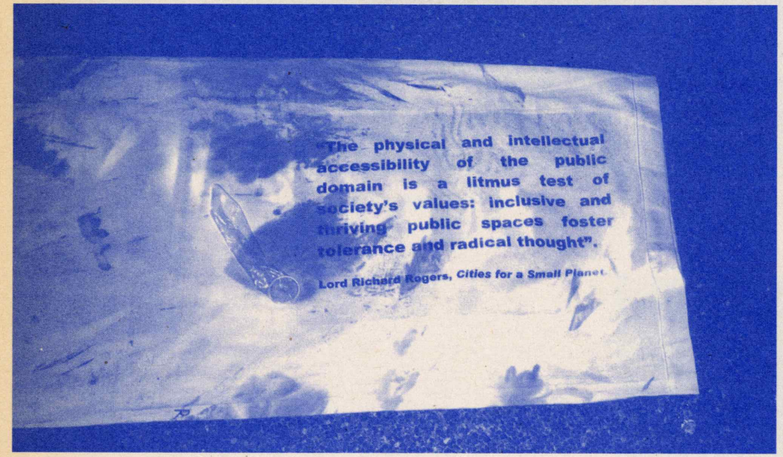
The language used by local politicians and planners in their press releases parallels the strong actions taken by local councils. In April 2001 the Westminster Council announced a Special Task Force To Drive Out Illegal Street Vendors. The press release proudly characterised the task force's action against the vendors as a blitz, thus comparing the plan to Nazi air operations in World War II. Other press releases from the same council used words like "war," "stamp out," "purge," and "eliminate" to describe its battle against street vendors. The association of eviction with cleansing appeared as well in the press release announcing "Westminster Supports Police Crime Drive To Clean Up The West End." The filth and dirt referred to in this headline was not litter or rubbish, but the brothels and their working girls and boys.

At the RIBA lecture I asked Rogers to respond to Transgressive Architecture's indictment in his role as an architect, rather than as a government employ. A few weeks later, in conversation with me, he repeated his news-making remarks from the lecture. He admitted that the phrasing of the definition for public space in the UTF report was narrow and exclusive. Nevertheless, he did not propose ways to enable urban nomads to survive the pressure from local communities and their politicians.

Rogers' statement at the RIBA lecture did not generate much debate in the media or in London's architectural milieu, so Transgressive Architecture decided to continue with new protests. The RIBA intervention became the first in a series of similar installations, collectively called *The Bad Sheets*, that took place between March and July 2001 and were carried out in public spaces that had been or were about to be cleansed.

III. the bad sheets interventions

The interventions usually took place during the daytime, aiming to capture the attention of the general public. However, the Russell Square and Bloomsbury Square interventions were directed at a particular community–the night occupants. For decades Russell Square was the most popular cruising ground in central London. But a few years ago the local council introduced powerful lighting and cut back the bushes to deter cruisers. In 2001 the council redesigned the square, restoring it to an original plan from 200 years ago, and closed it at night. A few weeks before it closed we carried out our intervention, using the bright lights intended to keep cruising out to highlight the right of such activity to take place in the square. *The Bad Sheets* were spread underneath the strongest spotlights, attracting an audience to the square. The white sheets glowed like ghosts from the past, restoring for a moment some of the thrill of night that characterised the square in the past.

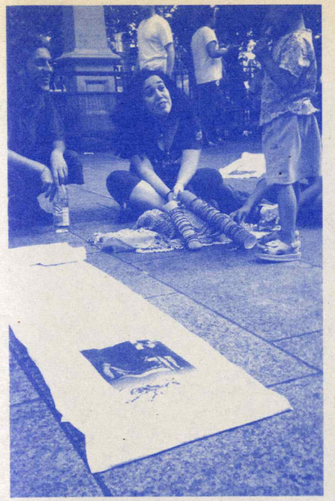

"The physical and intellectual accessibility of the public domain is a litmus test of society's values: inclusive and thriving public spaces foster tolerance and radical thought".
Lord Richard Rogers, Cities for a Small Planet

The Original Bad Sheets, 2001, Russell square Installation

After an hour or so we moved to Bloomsbury Square. This was another square the council wanted to close at night. This time, the sheets were placed in dark corners of the park, luring people to lie down or get laid on them. At the same time, the stained bed sheet–the original sheet with Rogers' text on it–was spread out at the entrance to the park next to a red candle. Since placing any placard in the park is illegal, I stood in the dark and handed out a short text on the intentions of the council, holding a cigarette lighter above it to enable the cruisers to read the text. The installation became a kind of temporary info desk, where the clerk offers just a bit of information, but is wearing tight leather jeans and is obviously more interested in the punters. In the morning, all that was left of the intervention was a few condoms in the trash bin and hundreds of pink leaflets covering the park fence, each emblazoned with the words "Sex has its place in public: Lord Rogers."

Placing *The Bad Sheets* during the day in busy public spaces was not easy. Ten minutes into our intervention in Trafalgar Square the square wardens had confiscated the sheets. Fortunately we had planned for this, and our pockets were full of surprises. Standing exactly where the Bad Sheets had been a few minutes before, we pulled bird seed from our pockets and began to use it to write letters on the pavement: V, VO, VOI, VOID. A few minutes later hundreds of pigeons were hovering above Trafalgar Square- a rare sight ever since the local authorities had evicted the street vendor who sold pigeon feed to the tourists. After a few minutes the text was consumed by the birds. Though the pigeons were not aware that the action was an intervention on their behalf–a protest against the London Mayor's drive to eradicate them from the square–they were more than helpful.

This intervention coincided with a ceremony to unveil *The Plinth*–a spotless, translucent resin monument created by artist Rachel Whiteread.



The Bad Sheets Installation, 2001, Leicester Square

Five minutes after its unveiling, the shiny *Plinth* was covered in pigeon droppings. The tourists and kids who had been deprived, by the mayor, of the pigeon-feeding tradition that used to be the central activity of the square cheered. Several tourists and children asked us for seeds, and in doing so became part of the intervention themselves.

The Bad Sheets interventions were experiments in redesigning public spaces using "non-architectural" means: installation, intervention, performance, and media manipulation, as opposed to the standard tools of architecture and planning, i.e. drawings, plans, and political authorisation. The interventions took a lot of inspiration from the urban nomads themselves. Like the nomads, the bed sheets were out of place. They were taken from their "proper" location (my bed) and placed in a public place, thus blurring the boundaries between private and public. This was how they started to be perceived as transgressive or "bad." The Bad Sheets continuously changed their identity from place to place and from viewer to user and unlike any other conventional art work, people were invited to jump on them. During each intervention the sheets were ritualistically folded to a size that resembled open sleeping bags and tombstones. The sheets were considered by some to be art objects, by others as a place to sit, to sell stuff from, or to have sex on.

The Bad Sheets were more than devices for protest or tools for designing space. They were a text, a reading and a writing. Gradually they obtained a life of their own, as the installations were repeated over and over again. Laid out in various public spaces, they became dirtier and dirtier. Even in cleansed public spaces the sheets accumulated dirt and redistributed it. During the six months in which we staged interventions, *The Bad Sheets* were never cleaned-except for one that I, in an emergency, had to use again for my bed.

OH, HEIDEGGER

AN ESSAY ON LOVING AN ARCHITECT

BY PERIEL ASCHENBRAND

I NEVER REALLY KNEW WHAT IT MEANT TO BE AN ARCHITECT. I MEAN, I KNEW THAT IT WAS THIS VERY ELABORATE SORT OF THING THAT TOOK ALL KINDS OF PLANNING AND MAPPING AND THAT IF YOU WERE AN ARCHITECT, YOU NEEDED A BIG TABLE AND RULERS AND ALL SORTS OF OTHER STUFF THAT LOOKED REALLY COOL. BUT I NEVER HAD ANY IDEA WHAT ALL THAT WAS FOR. I HAD NO IDEA WHAT ONE DID WITH ALL OF IT. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, IN QUEENS, WE USED TO GO OVER TO ADI AND OFER'S HOUSE. THEY HAD MOVED, FROM ISRAEL, TO QUEENS, NEW YORK. THEY MOVED, IN PART, SO THAT ADI COULD GET A PH.D. IN CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND IN PART, SO THAT OFER (PRONOUNCED OF-ER, NOT OFFER) COULD BE AN ARCHITECT. THEY HAVE SINCE MOVED BACK TO ISRAEL AND ARE EMBROILED IN THIS WAR, WHICH NEITHER OF THEM WANT ANY PART OF. THEY HAVE ALSO SINCE HAD TWO CHILDREN, ONE BOY AND ONE GIRL, AND I HAVE NOT LIVED IN QUEENS SINCE. THIS IS NEITHER HERE NOR THERE BUT IS RELEVANT ONLY INSOFAR AS THIS WAS, UNTIL RECENTLY, THE EXTENT OF MY KNOWLEDGE OF ARCHITECTURE. EXCEPT WHEN I WENT TO BARCELONA AND SAW GAUDÍ'S MIRROR THING.

AND THEN I MET MARI. (PRONOUNCED MAH-DEE, NOT MARY). FUJITA. (FOO-JEE-TA).

If you call Mari's cell phone and she, for one reason or another, does not pick up, you will be routed to a prerecorded message where you will hear the following: a machine which says "you have reached" and then Mari's voice "mah-dee-foo-jeeta." it is a very quick thing and sounds like it she is talking in fast forward. I mention this because it happens, from time to time, it happens, often enough, because Mari doesn't answer her phone because, well, as I am learning, Mari is an architect and what that means is that she is constantly doing shit. Unlike me, who is not an architect, who is constantly not doing shit, or I am, but in a very different way.

For example. Mari just disappears and builds things. Also she designs things. Also she carries a computer the size of Rhode Island around with her. Apparently, when you are an architect, you need to have a computer the size of Rhode island so that you can do all of the things that architects do. When I have tried to get Mari to explain to me what she does, I mean, really what she does, she has attempted to do so by invoking the word "scale" over and over again. So, for example, when I was like, "How do you construct a building from that tiny little drawing?" She repeated the word "scale" and said something like, "it's not that difficult, it's just like learning another language." I was like, "Yeah, okay, except that it's English." She ignored me when I said that last part.

One thing I have learned is that the reason you have to have a computer the size of Rhode Island is because your computer must be able to withstand having many applications open at once. When you are an architect, part of what you do is many things at once.

I learned this because Mari and I lived together this past summer. We lived together because we were teaching together. She was teaching architecture and fashion design and I was teaching philosophy and we were teaching at Amherst College and we were living in the dorms where we were not allowed to smoke. When I say we were living together, what I mean is that we were living on the same campus, not in the same room. I was, however, in her room quite often because we smoked in there. And the reason we smoked in there was because Mari figured out (is this an advanced concept?) that if you turn a fan backwards, you can smoke in a room that you are not supposed to smoke in, and all the smoke goes out, rather than in. which means that no one will know you were smoking. It is though, in effect, you were not smoking at all. The implementation of the turning of the fan backwards resulted in me and Mari spending a good deal of time perched up by her window. (I was too chicken to try it in my room.)

The first week we were there, before we were friends, I saw Mari (who is about 5'2" and 105 pounds) conspicuously carrying a very large piece of wood into her room. I later found out that she constructed a desk out of this piece of wood. A lovely, very sturdy, very hip, very industrial looking desk. It took her twenty minutes.

Architects, unlike writers, are modest about their work. When you voice shock or surprise, they brush you off–as though this is a skill anyone can learn.

This is false. Architecture, I have learned, is not a skill. It is an art. And Mari, though she is loath to admit it, is certainly an artist.

This was quite shocking for me to discover. Even after having seen Gaudí, even after everything, it is difficult to comprehend for those of us who work with words. It is difficult, for those of who work with words to imagine that you get your hands on something 'and then, when you're done, instead of having a pile of paper to show for your efforts, you have, for example, a desk. Or a house. it is shocking, to be sure. Also shocking, (and this, I think, is more ignorance on my part than anything else is) is that those who study architecture also read things like Heidegger.

Mari, who is in her last year of graduate studies at Princeton, has informed me that not only do they read things like Heidegger but also, at Princeton, they have a good deal of students shipped in from mainland, china. These students from mainland, china are not fluent in English, but have to read Heidegger nonetheless. Apparently, there is something called Heidegger week. Apparently, these students, right around Heidegger week, begin to scrunch up their faces and say things like, "Oh, Heidegger." which means, only, that they do not understand Heidegger, that they have no idea what he is talking about, that Heidegger, finally, makes no sense and is, therefore, incomprehensible, to these architecture students from mainland, china. Mari has told me that she has tried to soothe these students from mainland, china, by telling them that Heidegger is incomprehensible even to those of us who are fluent in the English language, but these students lament just the same, "oh, Heidegger."

Because Mari was teaching architecture, her students thought that they were going to be designing their "dream houses." Mari was horrified by this and said something to the effect of: I don't really think designing your dream house is that interesting. And beyond that, these kids have no idea what they're doing, how are they going to design a house?

I was a bit taken aback by this because I, too, (had I signed up for a course in architecture) would have thought, and been every excited, to design my own dream house. I used to snout around Mari's classroom a lot and when she finally conceded and allowed them to design a house, it was for a client, and I was the client.

As the client, I had very specific specifications. It was all very problematic. For example, in order for me to have, as I requested, a pool inside my home, there needed to be enough space under the pool in order that there would be somewhere for the water to go. This is the sort of thing I had never before considered. Also that the placement of a window is not an arbitrary decision as I had always, previous to this experience, thought. The placement of a window, indeed, dictates how much and when and where the sunlight will stream in. which is, finally, in theory, a very simple concept. But in actuality, I mean, how in the world do you figure something like that out?

For my part, though I am quite certain I will never build a house, I do have a respect and admiration for architecture that before I did not have. (And also for Heidegger, whom I have read extensively though always understood exactly what he was talking about). And also, that although I will never build a house or even a desk, Mari has inspired me. For example, the other day I bought an electric drill and fixed a bookshelf that had been sitting, for eight months, slanted to the left on account of the fact that it was missing three screws in the bottom shelf and was, essentially being held up only by a box of books that was propped up next to it. For without the box, the bookshelf certainly would have fallen down. Which is to say only that there is hope for those of us who are not architects, that we can learn something nonetheless, that we don't have to be totally inept and at the mercy of that which we don't understand even if we still don't really get it.

DIA:BEACON

loud paper interviews architect Linda Taalman

DIA:BEACON, THE NEW MUSEUM DESIGNED FOR THE DIA FOUNDATION'S PERMANENT COLLECTION, OPENED ON MAY 18, 2003. LOCATED ON THE HUDSON AN HOUR NORTH OF NEW YORK, THE MUSEUM IS HOUSED IN AN OLD NABISCO BOX FACTORY. LINDA TAALMAN AND HER PARTNERS AT OPENOFFICE, AN ARCHITECTURAL FIRM AND ARTS COLLABORATIVE WITH EXPERTISE IN EXHIBITION DESIGN, WERE HIRED TO COLLABORATE WITH ROBERT IRWIN ON THE RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING. (TAALMAN AND ALAN KOCH HAVE SINCE LEFT OPENOFFICE TO START TK ARCHITECTURE IN LOS ANGELES.)

LP: How did OpenOffice get involved in the Dia:Beacon project?

LT: Michael Govan and Lynne Cooke came to visit us in January of 1999 after learning of a complex conceptual project that Alan Koch and I had developed, with the assistance of Rodney Hill, called Houses x Artists, in which we invited twelve artists to collaborate on designing twelve houses for a book and exhibition project. Some of the artists involved in Houses x Artists were artists that they had worked with in the past. They were interested in how we approached working with artists in making architecture. This was before they had formed a final decision about an architect to work with them on the Nabisco factory building that they also did not own yet. An adjoining property being developed by Scenic Hudson was in the works and Dia thought we might propose a project for Scenic Hudson in tune with Dia's aspirations.

As we were developing analyses of this adjacent site, Dia began a project with Jorge Pardo for their facility on 22nd street. The project was to remodel the ground floor into a new lobby, gallery and bookstore space with a much more open public facade than the original Richard Gluckman design. They invited us to work with Jorge on the project to help facilitate the architectural transformation of the space. After this, they realized we might actually be the right people to collaborate with Robert Irwin, who they had begun discussing the Beacon project with, in renovating the 300,000 square-foot facility from factory to museum.

When they first proposed this idea we were surprised, and didn't know how to respond—we said we would need to think about it and develop a team that would be appropriate for the project. At that point we invited another architect, Lyn Rice, who had experience on large scale building projects and had recently left Diller + Scofidio, to collaborate with us on the project. With our combined experience as a team, now comprised of Alan Koch, Lyn Rice, Galia Solomonoff (recently of OMA), and myself, we felt we had a strong capability to execute the project.

LP: In contrast to some of the smaller, temporary exhibitions you've designed, how did you approach working on a project of this scale and permanence?

LT: We approached the project from a very pragmatic perspective. Given the scale of the building, there is an economy of means that we recognized as absolutely necessary. Given the strength of the building—already blessed with ninety north-light skylights, beautiful wood floors and some very powerful spaces—and the content of the permanent collection—minimal and early conceptual sculpture from the 1960s and 1970s—the raw industrial character of the space was an asset that made sense to take advantage of.

Early on in the process someone said to us that we had to do nothing with great precision, and we took that to heart. Our role models were Donald Judd, Robert Smithson, Richard Serra, Michael Heizer and the other artists of the collection, and our guru was Robert Irwin. Early on we traveled to Marfa with Michael and Lynne and several others to see the buildings that Judd had renovated to contain his sculptures, and learned how fine-tuning a building to align with its content could be perfected. Alan and I also did a tour of recent museums and buildings in Europe, including a few projects in Switzerland and Germany that dealt with light as an essential substance of the museum architecture, from Peter Zumthor's Kunsthaus Bregenz to Renzo Piano's Beyeler Foundation and Gigon & Guyer's Davos Museum.

Even though the scale of the project spatially and its permanence differed radically from our other projects, the complexity of the collaborative team was not that different from trying to mediate a large group of artists in designing conceptual houses and communicate this to curators, other artists and architects, and the public. We were mediators first and foremost.

LP: What was it like working with Robert Irwin?

LT: Working with Bob was an amazing experience. He is incredibly open to discovery and a teacher at heart, not to mention wise, with forty-plus years experience of practice. We were brats comparatively, and sometimes our role was to be a pain in the ass in making the building work. Bob looked at the project quite differently than an architect would; without the historical background of architecture he saw the space as a phenomenological experience that had to be honed.

In the beginning our collaboration with Bob was long-distance, and we were working on very different aspects of the building. He was coming to the building and looking at the space between the material, and we were looking at the material. We met at the interventions between the new and the old. Bob moved to New York to be able "to run his hands over the place" on a daily level, and we started to see more of each other.

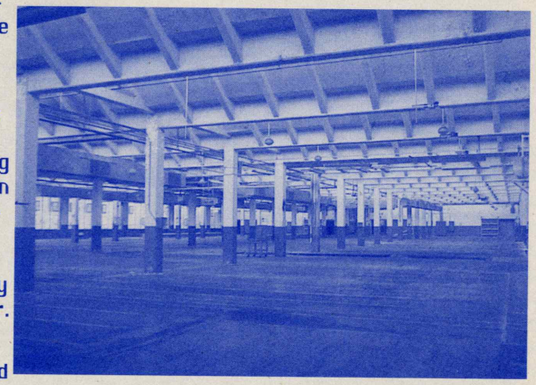
The interesting thing about working with Bob is how much faster he could work than us. We had a team of four-plus architects who had to reach consensus before a design could be presented; he only had to make the decision himself. We had hundreds of AutoCAD files and renderings, and he had a dozen hand-drawn pencil sheets.

Bob was involved in every major decision about how to organize the building and how it related to the garden and exterior spaces. He was involved with the flows through the space, of people and of light. Once the building schematics were finalized, we focused on realizing the project as a functional and economical museum building, and Bob focused on the gardens.

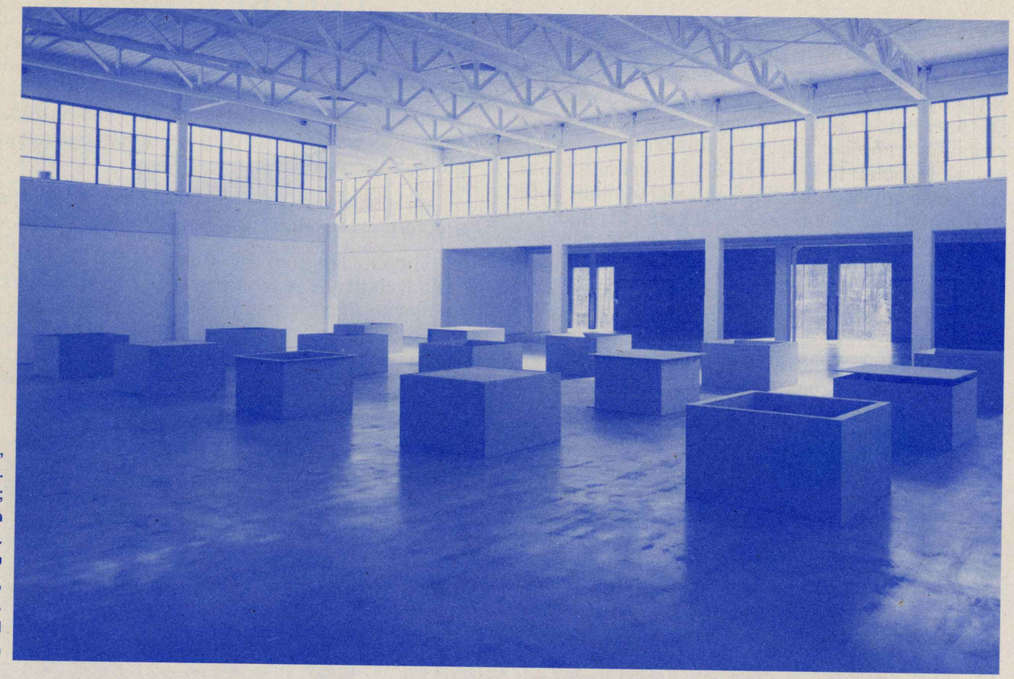
LP: What kind of challenges did you face in transforming a factory space into an art space?

LT: The challenge in transforming the space was how to do it with the least amount of material and most amount of effect, and keep it in tune with the art that would be housed there and make it all look like it had always belonged there. As Bob put it, we had to make sure "not to wreck the building"—it was already such a great space.

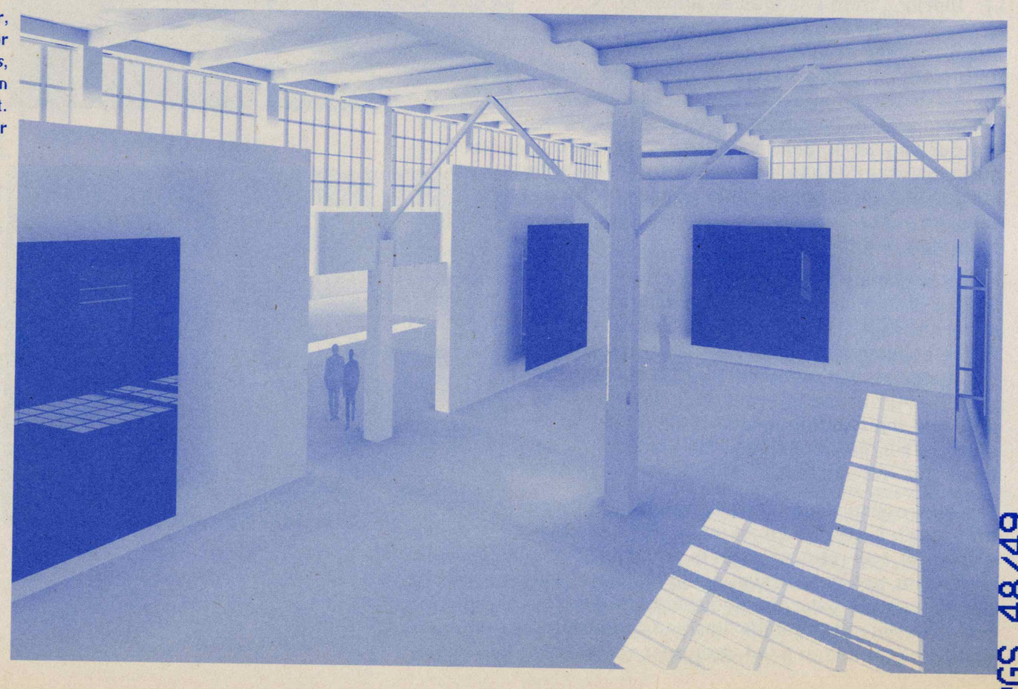
Interior view 1, Nabisco Factory, future site of Dia:Beacon, 1999. Photo: Michael Govan. ©Dia Art Foundation



Interior view 2, Nabisco Factory, future site of Dia:Beacon, 1999. Photo: Michael Govan. ©Dia Art Foundation



Donald Judd, untitled, 1976. Dia Art Foundation; gift of the Brown Foundation. Installation view at Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New York. Photo: Bill Jacobson



Gerhard Richter, rendering for *Six Gray Mirrors*, 2003. Collection of the artist. ©Gerhard Richter

The building had been designed in 1929 to have natural light evenly distributed in many of the spaces, to facilitate the printers' judgment of the color of the Nabisco boxes they were printing. So it was designed for the best possible viewing conditions already. There were demands placed on the building design to facilitate the curatorial layout of the art and to marry the art with the architectural experience.

The building design also had demands placed on it in terms of the code and life safety. We had to place new exits, new stairs and elevators, and fire systems to meet the requirements. But most of all the challenge was in getting the subtlety exactly right. We spent hours contemplating what type of glass should be used, should this glass be clear or translucent, should the wall end at this beam or the next beam, should the new floor for the Serra be at this level or another, etc. The aesthetic decisions were dominated by the phenomenological and the subjective—in the end we had to trust our feelings.

LP: What is it about a former industrial space that seems so fitting for this particular museum and these artists?

LT: When much of this art was being made there was a questioning of both the museum-gallery complex and artists' living and working spaces. Artists of the 1960s were moving into loft buildings in Soho and transforming the spaces into live/work lofts. That in turn inspired a rethinking of the relationship of the work they were creating with the spaces the work was created in. Simultaneously works were being created that were active within the gallery space, destroying its invisible and neutral quality. Richard Serra's lead Splash pieces asserted that the gallery space was not only essential to the work's presence but inseparably part of the work.

There was also an investigation into materials and techniques of mass production in art practice—the silkscreen technique of Warhol or the fluorescent lamps of Flavin, for example—that is echoed in the industrial. The process used to print Animal Cracker boxes is the same used to produce Warhol's Shadow painting series, now at Beacon. Excepting some of the paintings, drawings and photographs of the collection, the works are also extremely durable, from Serra's Torqued Ellipses to Michael Heizer's North, East, South, West. The works have been or might easily be installed outdoors and therefore can endure the raw climactic conditions of industrial architecture.

LP: Given that all the specific decisions about placement of art were left to the museum staff (and the artists), how did you go about creating appropriate spaces for the art?

LT: Creating the layout of the galleries and detailing the spaces was driven by the curatorial decisions that Lynne Cooke made, and the artist's responses to the spaces that they were given or had chosen. The space is not a neutral field that could receive any art; it is a custom-designed field that responds to the work.

In treating the spaces there were several critical steps: stripping back the space to the pure structure and material; removing it only where openings or radical spatial change was required to accommodate the art (as in the case of the Heizer, Judd's plywood boxes, or Serra's Ellipses); creating the limits of the gallery space and defining the amount of exposure each artist had to the other galleries or the outside views; and finally, adjusting and tweaking the standard details to complement the works installed. In the end, the reading of the space is more literary than mathematical and changes according to the script of the curated installation.

LP: New York Times critic Michael Kimmelman said that one experiences most of the art at Dia:Beacon as being "bound up with the building." Does this mean the architecture is never a neutral presence? Does the building end up competing with any of the artworks?

LT: The building is now inextricably linked to the art. Our entire purpose in designing the building was to disappear, and make the art seem like it was made for the building and vice versa. The architecture is not a neutral presence, it is an active presence—but it is a stealth active presence.

LP: Dia:Beacon divides a very large amount of space among a very small number of artists. Yet Dia founder Heiner Friedrich calls even this extravagant ratio of space a "compromise" of his original mandate. What do you think about that?

LT: I found this to be a very interesting proposition. After Dia:Beacon it is very difficult to view other contemporary museum spaces in the same way. They all seem very crowded to me. After seeing Marfa and the Lightning Field, two of Heiner Friedrich's major projects in his foundation of Dia, this is actually a rational statement. I can see how he might have dedicated the building to a couple of artists to transform it into a total and singular experience. Judd could have done the building alone. The vision Heiner has of art is so big, it does not respond to the demands or concerns of the museum space. Dia:Beacon is definitely a museum, albeit a new model of one.

Trespassing

by Chris Grimley

Architecture's uneasy relationship with art has always been difficult to dissect. The media increasingly promotes individual architects as the premier artistic geniuses. Conjuring up an architecture that transcends real world restraints and enters the vaunted arena of art, many architects become caught up in the illusion that their work somehow subscribes to a "poetic notion." The realities of architecture—the manner in which it is made, the conditions of its production—define it as the opposite, and in fact align it in a tradition that more resembles that of craft.

Several museums and galleries have recently mounted exhibitions by inviting artists to tackle issues of architectural practice. These shows aim to question the artistic dimension of architectural form-making. As artists have gained access to and adopted software and other technologies designed for architects, they have begun to directly engage with the strategies of architectural production. That several of the exhibitions showcasing this work took place within months of each other at disparate locations in North America points toward a current trend in the art world—an obsession with interdisciplinarity and the desire to conflate art and science, or art and technology.

Concurrently, other exhibitions have taken the artifacts of architectural practice and displayed them as art objects in their own right. Far from a documentary attempt to describe the architectural process to the audience, this particular breed—exemplified by drawing shows at the Museum of Modern Art, Max Protetch Gallery in New York, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, or the exhibition Perfect Acts of Architecture organized by Ohio's Wexner Center for the Arts—removes the position of the drawing as a product of architectural process and allows it to float freely as a fetishized object to be collected and displayed.

Many of these shows trace the trend in which practitioners turned to the production of drawings as a useful tool to explore ideas of architecture. One could view the *Continuous Monument* projects by Superstudio (late-1960s conceptualists), Bernard Tschumi's *Advertisements for Architecture* (a post-spectacle embrace of medium), and most of the work of Archigram (architecture's Pop legacy) as early examples of architecture engaged in actively cribbing from contemporaneous art practices in order to question both the traditional foundations and representational limits of architecture, as well as to expand the role of the architect. As these early experiments were filtered through the lens of Postmodernism, the artifact increasingly became the focus, supplanting unbuilt, perhaps unbuildable, architecture. One glance at the meticulous drawing-paintings of Zaha Hadid or the painstaking hand drawings of early Morphosis or Neil Denari demonstrates the end result: the emergence of the architectural drawing as collectable art, where the means of production becomes the commodity. While it's true the intended purpose of these works is to allow the architect to remove herself from the constraints of commerce and the physics of building in order to explore (we hope) social, political and perhaps formal conditions that would not be feasible as architecture, that this took place in roughly the same period that saw the explosion of the art market is not coincidental.

At the outset of the catalog for the recent exhibition Trespassing: *Houses x Artists*, museum directors Peter Noever (MAK Center for Art and Architecture) and Kathleen Harleman (Bellevue Art Museum) state that the exhibition offered its artists "optimal creative conditions." The intent was to remove the external demands of program, scale, site conditions, finances and architectural preconceptions—in other words, the very foundations upon which we as architects operate on a daily basis. The goal of this liberation was to ensure that artists could examine the house in "absolute terms as a spatial and social hypothesis."

What *Houses x Artists* offers are already-ran ideas about the nature of the single-family house. Kevin Appel is concerned with transparency and the gaze, and his glass house in a garden recalls the many iterations of the type since Philip Johnson beat Mies to the punch with his own Glass House of 1949. Chris Burden's *Small Skyscraper, Quasi Legal Los Angeles County* is not embedded in the city, but rather on a cliff, a mesa or "deep in the land." (Perhaps he will build one on the site of the Eames House, whose removed, but still-part-of-the-city, plot has been institutionalized as the ideal location for a case study.) Jim Isherman lifts the roof of Le Corbusier's Heidi Weber Pavilion above the structure, creating a home with "unique triangular clerestory light condition(s)" and a plan resembling Hejduk's nine-square Texas House below. David Reed proposes a house for an art collector. The rough-edged model is littered with dollhouse-sized reproductions of carefully annotated paintings by artists who must be his friends. All of these projects skirt an underlying question of professionalism and technical expertise and instead propose a dialog that is firmly rooted in the nature of the art object itself.

Of all the proposals set forth, Chris Burden's quirky high-rise appears to be one of the only ones that might be built, albeit expensively. And Jessica Stockholder's is the only one to engage, if conceptually, with the problems that construction, coordination and client present to the architect. I am not arguing here that the aforementioned conditions are integral to the production of an architectural solution. But what are we left with to judge these works as architectural proposals? How can these works, which diagramatically quote Modernism—a ribbon window here, a glass box there—possibly make a serious contribution to a new concept of living, or in any way advance the concept of the house? What puzzles me is that given the extreme lack of limit, there wasn't anything offered to react with or against, to accept or challenge, or to hold as measures against the solution.

Unfortunately, the exhibition succeeds in reinstating the house as an idealized container in an even more idealized environment. Without exception all of the artists have chosen the single, detached house as the locality of their investigation. Perhaps it is a fault with the title: *Houses x Artists* rather than *Housing x Artists*. I had hoped that the model available to early modernist architects—that of individual houses for individual clients—would at least be challenged by a group struggling to question its dominance at the outset of a new millennium. Yet there is nothing here that suggests the development or distribution of any of their ideas in mass housing strategies, or is there much to suggest that the products delivered accomplish what the directors had hoped they would. The choice of the unique object—the house—is not surprising, given that the cult of originality has never strayed far from the field of artistic intervention.

The artists, curators and essayists of *Houses x Artists* tend to refer to the site as a displaced entity. Historically, the site, for architects and builders, is a sacred, moral thing. To lose it as a motivating factor seems to fly in the face of those who would ascribe sensation and the beginnings of architecture to it. It is interesting to note that once these artists become untethered, the nature of the pieces float in a netherworld that does not emphasize or critically place the object produced. It is virtual, removed, somehow unimportant. Actually, unimportant is not quite correct. The absence of the site in this body of work could be construed as constituting both the freedom of choice and its subsequent anxiety in the artist. In many instances the limitation on design that site provides formally, aesthetically, and, most importantly, architecturally is left to languish in the shadow of the artifact itself.

In fact, it is only Jessica Stockholder, in her insulation-inspired, tectonically feasible yet humorous *Pink Concrete Timber Model*, who states quite emphatically that her design will be affected—read made different—by a relocation to a different site. She acknowledges the hermetic qualities of the terrain in which she is operating. At first this loss of site seems like a willing enough distraction to let the artistic mind wander, to allow readings of interiority, psychology and indifference actually dominate. Imagine the opportunity to not be tied physically to anywhere. The artist is released from the boundaries of specificity to a ground and allowed to wander a new terrain of both undetermined and perhaps unprecedented analysis. But what do the artists make of this opportunity? In the case of Burden, there is nothing other than the coy tactics of finding a loophole in the zoning code that allows him to build his skyscraper. What he doesn't engage in any way is the nature of the building type, the evolution of the need to condense the value of property vertically, or the manner in which it has primarily shaped the urban development of the twentieth century.

Barbara Bloom's project, *Game/Maquette*, is a parody of domesticity. The site, while not abandoned, is critically virtual. The house is only present through a lens or computational metaphor, where the icons of organization on the computer are transferred onto the contents of the house. For Bloom, building is not the aim; what interests her is the theoretical construct of the house—the problems that inspire building rather than the solution the built form represents. This alone is provocative: without an existing architecture, there is no possibility for trespassing. Ultimately it is Bloom's ideas that most closely resemble the interests that Houses x Artists initially set out to investigate.

The artists in the exhibition typically engaged in the same types of representation that architects use to describe their work to both the trade (i.e. the scaled, annotated and delineated plan and section) and the client (the subjective perspective, often coupled with collage or some other medium belonging to a tradition of fine art). The plans presented in the show were drawn by the group OpenOffice, architects of the recent Dia:Beacon and collaborators in the development of the exhibition. The catalog reveals that many of the models and drawings were also prepared by OpenOffice in consultation with each of the artists involved. This collaboration can be read as an attempt at cross-fertilization with the intent of producing conditions outside of the standard realm of architectural practice.

But this strategy is the architect's attempt at playing artist. The plans are a dizzying array of colors, much like an AutoCAD file printed without proper pen settings. Perspective images are taken from screen captures, and as such their resolution confuses the typical way that these drawings are presented. Models are left as studies, reflecting not only the lo-res aspects of many of the project details, but also the desire by the artists to remove themselves from the traditional rigor of architectural representation. The catalog further elucidates that the representational strategy might have another, not so hidden motivation. According to Alan Koch, a partner in OpenOffice, architects are "always struggling with the problem of representation. As an architect, you plan and you need to sell your idea visually as a representation of what you are going to do, whereas an artist can make a whole string of works and then doesn't need to represent what they are going to be like." This conflation of the nature of representation and the idea of commodification is an important one given the circumstances of this exhibition.

Ideally, as architects we are called on to give spatial and representational intent to ideas—ideas about form, materiality, space, sociological and political circumstance. Our use of representation can be thought of as the true substance of our work. The actual making of architecture—the piles of paper construction documents, the cataloguing of clarification memos, the mess of administering a building as it leaves the printed page—filters our labor through the labor and expertise of a contractor. The building—as fact—is not what we are paid to do. All of our communication is structured around being able to clearly and analytically transmit the idea, through drawing, into concrete form. It's true there are many practices that one can point to where architecture moves away from this standard relationship of drawing to artifact, and blurs the boundaries of the process. But for the most part, they serve to emphasize that the majority of us rarely get our hands dirty.

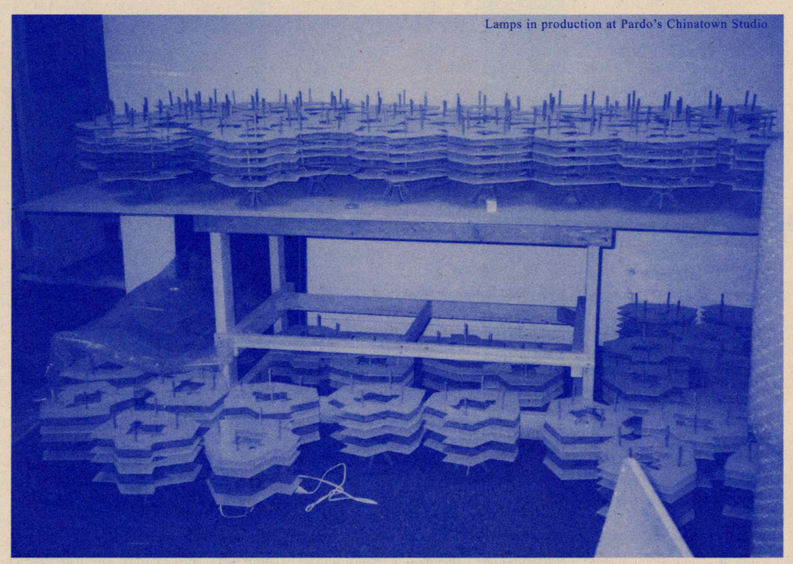
What is it, then, that we can take from this interaction, this mixing of identity between the artist and the architect? Is it capable of making collaborations that profoundly affect our understanding of space and form? Is it simply an attempt to make relevant both practices? Can there be a way of looking at this collaboration beyond the Richard Serra/Frank Gehry paradigm? (The latter's Disney Concert Hall is beginning to seem more and more like a Serra with a program—the slipped, warped planes revealing very conventional window wall systems.) There are many examples of art practices informing the work of architects, but I am not so sure of the reverse being true. Perhaps it is a case of the architect trying to make a more economically viable career?

Despite my critical assessment of the *Houses x Artists* exhibition, I do believe that there is an intersection of art and architecture that can be productive and socially engaged. But in the exhibition and its accompanying catalog there is too much speak and not enough action. By removing the responsibility of site and client—in the rather naive hope that this might give a free space in which the artist-architect can create—the curators have removed the vitality from the production and experience of architecture.

ART + COMMERCE

loud paper interviews Jorge Pardo

LOS ANGELES ARTIST JORGE PARDO CREATES SPACES AND THE OBJECTS THAT GO IN THEM–<NONE>A RENOVATION OF THE DIA FOUNDATION'S BOOKSTORE IN NEW YORK, A SET OF HANGING LAMPS FOR SOTHEBY'S HEADQUARTERS, RESTAURANT FURNISHINGS FOR A TRADE SHOW IN LEIPZIG, A MODERNIST BUNGALOW (HIS OWN) IN THE LOS ANGELES HILLS. JUST DON'T CALL HIM AN ARCHITECT.



Lamps in production at Pardo's Chinatown Studio

LP: SO HOW DO YOU VIEW THIS WEIRD CROSSOVER THING THAT IS GOING ON BETWEEN ARTISTS AND ARCHITECTS?

JP: I don't see it as a crossover at all. I mean, I think of myself as somebody who is strictly making sculpture. I am involved with a lot of different aesthetic problematics. I certainly don't think that there is anything idealistic in joining these things. I don't believe that these things lack anything. I think that's ridiculous.

If art's going to be about a complicated cultural discursive, you're going to deal with space in a way that it really hasn't at this point. In order to do that it has to engage in the world. Not necessarily the world of architecture, because I think the world of architecture is even more deficient. Art has to enter cities and places. You do that by negotiating buildings. I have no interest in architecture as an artisan. I think what I am interested in are buildings, structure and civic space, and people's of images of themselves.

LP: DO PEOPLE APPROACH YOU AND SAY, "WHAT ARE YOU NOW, AN ARCHITECT?"

JP: People do that all the time.

LP: WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?

JP: I don't know, I think that you have to look at the projects that have architectural components in the same way that you look at other images. At the end of the day it's a convoluted mimetic operation.

LP: HOW WOULD YOU EXPLAIN WHAT YOU DO AS AN ARTIST?

JP: Art is kind of boring and esoteric. Having a career as an artist, showing in galleries and things like that doesn't interest me. I have a gallery, so I don't mean to say I am outside the system. Projects that make problems in the world are interesting. Case in point being the house up in Sea View, where there are very strange forms of mediation that happen, and I actually can observe the work and there is a certain kind of behavior that is discursive.

LP: CAN YOU PROGRAM THAT?

JP: I don't think you can program that. You can sort of set up a frame and a vantage point to look at things.

LP: WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE?

JP: Well there is a consciousness with which a project is made. A museum comes up to an artist and says, do you want to do a show, and you say, well I want to make a house. And I don't want to make a house that goes in a museum, and I don't want to make a house that something weird is going to happen, I want to just make a house and see what happens. It's a very blunt quotidian exercise. I mean, obviously if one follows a more interesting logic you realize the strangeness of the project is about observation and how people behave in relation to something.

LP: SO WHAT IS PART OF THE ARTWORK THEN? HOW PEOPLE CAME TO THE HOUSE AS AN ARTWORK?

JP: That is the artwork.

LP: SO [THE HOUSE] IS JUST A FRAME.

JP: It's discursive product. That's all it is. The artwork is as many contingencies as come from the experience. I don't think as a structure it is anything anyone can manage. You can't think about it formally unless you're an idiot. Like thinking that by making something green something is going to happen. That is not the way it works. You can think about it in terms of, what would be an interesting sort of gesture to make, what would be a way to sort of address a museum exhibition, or what would be an interesting way for an artist to make a house, or for a painting to be made after this house. Not of the house but as within the same line of sight. You know, you make a house, you make a painting, you make a pair of shoes, you make a drawing. It's like what happens when you try to discern these as anything other than sculpture and painting. It's not making readymades. It's something else.

LP: THERE IS THIS BLURRING BETWEEN ARTWORK AND PRODUCT. I MEAN, YOU COULD TALK ABOUT ANDREA ZITTEL, AND HER WORK IS A LOT ABOUT MAKING PRODUCT, MAKING ARTWORK THAT COMMENTS ON PRODUCT. YOU'RE ACTUALLY MAKING ARTWORK THAT BECOMES A PRODUCT.

JP: I think that I am involved in a practice that highly problematizes those kinds of notions. And makes it impossible for me to say things like what she says. For many different reasons. I don't think that art gets made with your hands, as a primary mode.

I don't have any faith in the idea that an object can transform at the rate that a discursive can. Many things are set up that can ask questions from different points of view, that is what I am interested in. Objects are things that I read as very conventional things in that their essence is very problematic to begin with. I don't think that things have essences. Or any of these kinds of properties. That is not a model for an artwork for me.

LP: SO HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THEN, SOMEONE COMING TO YOU AND SAYING, I WANT A LAMP.

JP: I give them a lamp. They want a lamp, I want to make a lamp. I like making lamps.

LP: SO WHEN YOU MAKE A LAMP, IT'S A LAMP.

JP: It's a lamp and it's an artwork. Because they only come through me because of other projects that I have done. They don't want a lamp. They want a Jorge Pardo. They get a lamp and I get to make a lamp. I get to design a lamp. Maybe I get to use the lamp in some other installation. Maybe it's research for something else.

LP: I'VE BEEN READING A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR WORK AND IT SEEMS THAT EVERYONE TRIES TO COUCH IT WITHIN THE FORMAL ELEMENTS.

JP: Because I think that's the dominant mode of discourse for art criticism. And that's not going to change any time soon. There is a whole industry that supports it. It's a matter of legacy. People who spend a lot of money on works of art, people who spend millions of dollars on a painting, they want a Marxist discourse. It goes way back. Like they want to buy a Mercedes Benz. It is really that simple. I think art criticism is–and I don't know any artist who would disagree with me–is one of the most impoverished cultural fields that is out there right now.

LP: EXCEPT MAYBE ARCHITECTURE CRITICISM.

JP: Except maybe architecture criticism. It really doesn't say anything, doesn't do anything. What it does is it does this, you know, flat kind of celebratory. It's not describing what's happening when you are in front of a work of art. It's not describing what isn't happening.

LP: IT'S NOT DESCRIBING THE ARTWORK.

JP: It can do that but only in the way you describe a shoe.

It is what architecture is, though. I am not saying that to be facetious. I am saying that the kind of things that seem ancillary are actually what it is.

LP: IT'S NOT THE WORK ITSELF, IT'S THE PROFESSION?

JP: Yeah. You end up having discussions about professionalism.

And then there are these few people who kind of… you know, I like Rem Koolhaas, because he is such a freak and he is at least saying things like "C'mon guys, architecture isn't about space anymore. Let's go work with Prada. Let's look at trends, or something like that.

I don't think that the architectural community has really processed what it might mean for a whole set of new agendas to be what drives it, you know, like the progressive wing or something like that. You know, I like what Koolhaas is doing, or not doing.

LP: OTHERWISE IT BECOMES A SORT OF FORMALIST "YOU LIKE OR YOU DON'T" SORT OF THING?

JP: Yeah. And generally architects are people who have always by necessity needed a parasitic relationship to art. It's like a lot of kids become architects because their father says they have to make money. In their head they are thinking they are making art where they can make money. It is not a coincidence that a large number of architects, once they are far enough in their career and they get bored, they start painting. It's retarded but it happens.

LP: WHAT ABOUT SOMEONE LIKE FRANK GEHRY?

JP: I like Frank Gehry's early work a lot. I am not interested in another building that looks like a whale or anything like that. But I think he's a serious architect. He did some really interesting things at certain times.

LP: AND WHAT ABOUT WHEN HE TALKS ABOUT HIMSELF AS AN ARTIST?

JP: I don't know why he would want to do that. It doesn't make any sense to me, he seems like a fine architect. Why he needs to feel like he is an artist? I don't know where that impulse comes from. For me, I studied art after I studied biology. It seemed to me what kept my desire to learn, within an art department or with artists around, is that I didn't really have a sense of how I would be formed. And that was just really interesting to me, that being an artist is by nature stepping into what could be a very productive and ambiguous field. And when people like Frank Gehry use the term, it seems like it's for a completely opposite reason.

LP: IT'S LIKE HE LOOKS UP TO YOU GUYS.

JP: I don't know why architects would look up to artists. They're different things. There's a sense of impoverishment making architecture versus making art, that they're not really real. If they would engage the problems of practice in a serious way you wouldn't have these problems, you know? You'd be working. You would try to improve your situation. You'd try to make it more complicated. And actually deal with the world.

LP: WHAT MEANS DO YOU USE TO ENGAGE THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

JP: Well, I make a lot of public art projects. I do things, get asked to do things, and people don't even go through a gallery. And they are asking me to sort of fix a space–nobody likes to be here, nothing happens here, maybe you could do something interesting and make something happen here. And that is really interesting to me 'cause it is so fucking open. What would make somebody engage with this space?

LP: AND WHAT IS YOUR PROCESS FOR THAT?

JP: I have my assistant visit the place, then I go and I start to talk to people and then I think about culture and I look at my lamps and I look at my drawings and think, well, it would be neat to do that. What would happen if this was here? What happens if you make people look at this? And what happens if the light is like this? What happens to the rest of the area?

It's always a question of a speculative kind of problem solving. Maybe I go somewhere and there's a bunch of beautiful trees, and I wonder, why are they here? And I start to understand maybe why they were planted and how they were planted and how they affect their relationship to the building becomes clear. And that for me is the ideal way to sort of unravel what I do. Proposing a kind of potential for that. And that is very different than decoding, because that implies that there is a key that is a priori

LP: THAT IS SOMETHING I FOUND IN READING ABOUT YOUR WORK–NO ONE GETS THAT. THERE IS SOMETHING MISSING, I GUESS, WITHOUT ACTUALLY OCCUPYING THE ARTWORK.

JP: Well, the artwork is never the actual experience of being in the work. Or being adjacent to the work is never really addressed. Art criticism treats art objects as though people don't really exist. All the walls are painted white, the dealer is five miles away, the guy watching the building, all the things that are really significant to consuming that kind of experience of the artwork are things that are not really made present when somebody criticizes a work of art. And those are the things that I am interested in. When I go somewhere, I have an experience of some sort, I feel like I have engaged in a kind of a multiplicitous kind of sense of being lost.

LP: I LIKE THAT IDEA ABOUT BEING LOST. I DON'T QUITE KNOW WHERE TO TAKE IT, TELL ME A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THAT.

JP: Well, I think interesting situations make space for you to wander. When you see an interesting movie you start to leave the film, you start to think about scenarios in your life, places that you have been. You start to think about literature, stories that you've read. You go off. An interesting art work can hopefully make the space where a similar poetic can happen. It happens by there being things that happen all at the same time, where you can't really discern where the work starts and where the work ends.

I mean, where does the work start? At the theater? It is completely transient. It is like being stuck in a tunnel. Like a piece of glass. The history of that space, what Gluckman did before me. There are so many things that constitute what the experience is.

LP: AND YOU ARE GRABBING AT EVERY ONE OF THOSE.

JP: And I think you can do that. I think you can work with things like that. That is a more ambitious way to think about art.

LP: I THINK IT IS A REALLY AMBITIOUS WAY.

JP: And it is not something you can take away with you. It is not something you can have a punch line for. It's not something you can paraphrase.

LP: IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN SELL.

JP: You can sell anything. But you are selling it in terms of fractions. It is not a question of selling or not selling. It is a question of living.

Call and Response The Architecture of Form:uLA Dimension Laboratory

by Ruth Keffer

The Kudzu vine covers seven million acres in the Deep South. Like a horror-movie parasite, it can grow a foot a day. Left unchecked it will consume anything in its path, destroying other vegetation, blanketing mailboxes and parked cars, smothering sheds, barns and even entire houses in its carpet of green. Eventually, in true science fiction fashion, the vine will feed on itself to survive.

Kudzu would seem to be an unlikely muse for architecture, especially the stand up and stay put variety. But for renegade architects Bryan Cantley and Kevin O'Donnell (who both, not coincidentally, began their schooling in North Carolina), the vine's paradoxical nature, its embodiment of contradictory qualities—benign but pervasive, insatiable but self-consuming—serves as the principal inspiration for their particular mode of architectural experimentation.

They call this principle "mechudzu," a hybrid of mechanical form and organic growth. Throughout their ten-year collaboration they have been exploring the ways in which mechudzu manifests itself as architectural form, function, aesthetic, and ideology.

Their Southern California practice, Form:uLA Dimension Laboratory, includes commissioned projects and built work, but most of the pair's energy is devoted to experimental work, in the form of competition entries, exhibition installations, and independent projects. Both architects have day jobs—Cantley teaches design at Cal State Fullerton, O'Donnell works for an architect in Los Angeles—but in their after hours they pursue an obsessive, sometimes maniacal quest for what they call a "pure architecture": an architectural language untainted by the mundane constraints of clients, costs or even the laws of physics.

As the name implies, the agenda of Form:uLA Dimension Laboratory is to explore dimensionality, to see what happens when competing or conflicting modes of representation—graphic vs. sculptural, perspectival vs. axonometric, digital vs. gestural, Cartesian vs. temporal—try to co-exist. In these collisions of contradictory forms and functions, mechudzu emerges as a mutant but highly robust architectural entity.

The motif of Form:uLA's design language is always the machine—the man-made in its most generic form. At first glance their drawings look like overly fussy mechanical diagrams, the kind you might see in Victorian-era equipment catalogs. But look more closely, and the drawings' hybrid parts refuse to compose. In Hybridrawing no. 030801, for example, graphic figures (Japanese kanji, planes of binary code, directional arrows) collide and intersect with modeled forms (pipes, tubing, harnesses, levers, pulleys) in a space that oscillates uncomfortably between two and three dimensions. The assembled whole is defiantly abstract: the more you try to read the drawing, the more agitated the unresolved elements become. The overall effect is disorientation, and that is the point.

The drawing is clearly not, as architectural protocol would dictate, a set of building instructions or a depiction of a particular space. It does not obey the architectural mandate to construct a more perfectly-ordered world. Instead, it is an invitation to abandon order. The drawing itself is Form:uLA's laboratory, a fluid, boundaryless, unpredictable environment in which every idea the two architects have—deliberate or accidental, serious or ridiculous, revolutionary or merely subversive—is let loose to metastasize.

Cantley and O'Donnell's main resource as they experiment with the collision of opposites is themselves: the two realized years ago that their partnership was one of polar extremes. As a student Cantley was a fan of the neo-classical; O'Donnell gravitated towards the organic. Cantley came from a background of art classes and learned to embrace the technical demands of architecture school; O'Donnell, a drafting junkie, had to abandon his dependence on tools to really learn to draw. Cantley usually draws vertically; O'Donnell works horizontally.

Each time they embark on a project they are testing new strategies for integrating—creating a hybrid of— their opposing visions. The day I visited the two architects in Cantley's Fullerton studio, they were eager to show me the first results from a new collaboration exercise, a project they are calling Oscillation Drawings. A single drawing—beginning with one of their typically fantastical machine forms—is passed back and forth between them, and with each pass the image is altered according to a short but eccentric set of rules: change the orientation, activate the edges of the composition, add coded text, superimpose an inset "window" into another dimension of information, etc. The mechudzu principle is at work here, as each incarnation of the drawing serves as host for the next.

The machine form mutates, like the birds that turn into fish in an Escher drawing. Transforming in a process akin to natural growth, the final form may be radically unlike its antecedents. Cantley and O'Donnell talk excitedly about doing an exhibition of several series of these oscillation drawings, where they could show five or fifteen or even fifty iterations of each image.

The oscillation exercise is itself a machine for generating new forms. It resembles the experiments of Surrealist artists in the 1920s, who used a variety of strategies to create "automatic" drawings that bypassed the conscious control of any one artist. In one series of exercises known as the Exquisite Corpse, the artists could not see each other's contributions, and the final drawings often featured grotesque figures with conglomerations of mismatched parts.

Giving form to the grotesque is not one of Form:uLA's stated goals, and both architects feigned offense when I told them their drawings were "scary." Nevertheless, in my imagination mechudzu inhabits the drawings as a sentient being: mischievous, slightly manic and decidedly alien. Its animate presence is at least a cousin of Surrealist and Dada representations. The anthropomorphizing of machines, or what Dada artist Francis Picabia called the "mechanomorphic," was one of the motifs those artists explored in their scrutiny of a industrialized, dehumanized world.

Cantley and O'Donnell's interests are more abstract, but also more focused: they are not interested in suspending their conscious control of architectural conventions. Instead they simply want to occasionally sidetrack that control, to misdirect themselves in a directed way. The process of call and response they employ, whether working in tandem or in unison, is a deliberate strategy for cultivating accident and surprise, both fertile grounds for new ideas.

Some of their interactive rituals are old habits, left over from the days when they lived on different coasts and had to maximize their infrequent face-to-face time. During that period—before e-mail, before digital photography-they exchanged their drawings as scanned Polaroids, sent via FedEx and fax, and began refining the system of "distance collaboration" that is now an almost essential aspect of their work.

"A lot of how we work together comes directly out of the fact that we were 3,000 miles away," O'Donnell explained.

"If we ever had a studio together we'd probably have to build this big concrete wall between us," Cantley added, "just to make sure we had some interference of energy."

O'Donnell agreed: "A cone of silence!"

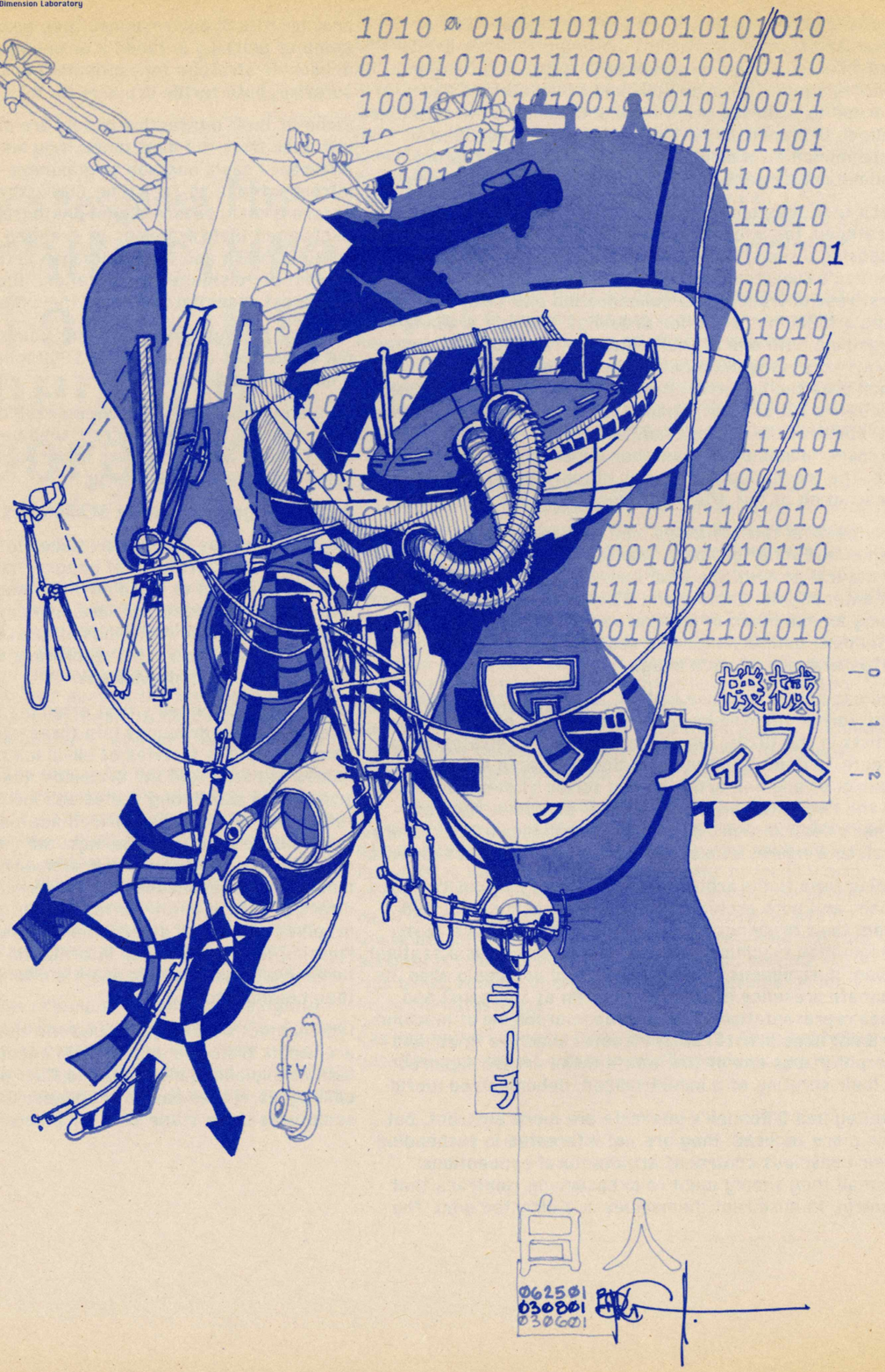
The drawings, as they've multiplied into progressive generations of images, have given mechudzu a way to morph off the single page. And if a solitary (and flat) drawing couldn't contain the myriad mutations, it seems inevitable that Form:uLA's laboratory would migrate into three dimensions.

Cantley and O'Donnell's first attempts to translate their early drawings into three-dimensional form resulted in a series of all-black models named Batman. Like the drawings, these models juxtaposed conflicting scales and incongruous functions, but they also shared another important feature with the drawings: the inclusion of seemingly random graphic elements—letters, numbers, miscellaneous characters—applied directly to the models' surfaces. This graphic ornamentation was a very literal means of layering two-dimensional information onto three-dimensional form, and it's a technique they continue to use.

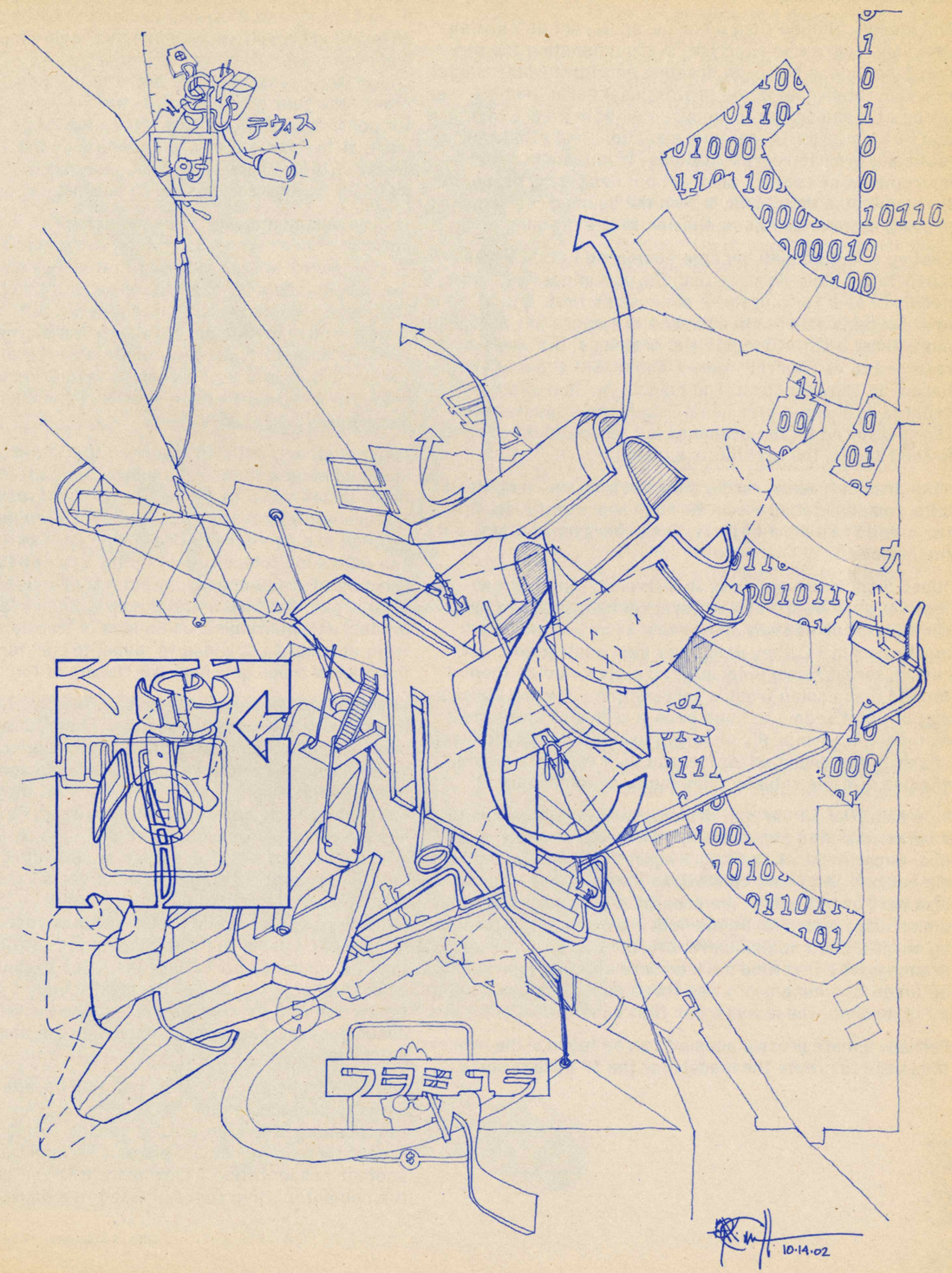
(The project's nickname saved the two architects from the increasingly agonizing task of explaining mechudzu to their perplexed colleagues; it was easier to suggest the black sculptures were stage sets for a new Batman

Hybridrawing no. 030801, 2001

all images courtesy of Form;uLA Dimension Laboratory



Shift Prototype Hybrid Drawing, #2 Series, 2001



SHIFT PROTOTYPE - H.D.#2SERIES

movie than to launch into a defense of experimental multidimensionality.)

The models, though they were based in part on existing drawings, were also exercises in circumventing the strict correspondence between drawing and three-dimensional representation that is the professional norm, and the hierarchy of meaning that is imposed on both media. The plan and its counterparts—section, elevation, and other mathematically precise representations—traditionally serve as instruments of control, abstract but necessary precursors that legitimize built form. In turn the building reciprocates, proving the worthiness and vision of the drawings.

Cantley and O'Donnell became enamored with a simple, iconoclastic idea—do away with the plan altogether, and generate new form in three dimensions first. One of their next projects gave them a chance to explore this possibility more fully: a set of models and drawings, the first to be referred to as "hybrid" works, for a 2001 show at the 3A Garage in San Francisco. The models for that show were created as three-dimensional "sketches," spontaneous forms inspired by the drawings but independent of them. In their notes, the architects explain:

"The drawings were rarely pure abstraction—they dealt with communicating vision through representation. But the models are pure objects. They represent nothing but themselves."

These models are not easy to interpret, whether you see them as pure objects or as three-dimensional drawings. The hybrid forms seem both more assertive and more mysterious in 3-D; they deny their own abstraction, yet remain tantalizingly indecipherable. As I studied them, I found I was having trouble following the precise chronology of what seems to have been a series of watershed moments in Form:uLA's history. I asked the two architects to clarify this evolution for me, and their response was a glimpse into the sublime complexity of their work:

"We saw [the 3A Garage] drawings as a continuation of a series that had begun many years prior, but were a new experiment at crafting a hybridization between two dimensions and three dimensions within a 2-D medium. Also part of that show, we created a new series of models which were informed by the new 2-D drawings, informed by our 3-D work, which were informed by our previous 2-D drawings. The four new models were a similar hybridization between two dimensions and three dimensions, but within a 3-D medium. These were our first dimensional sketches."

Perhaps a more prosaic account can be found in the process they used to create the models for the 3A Garage show.

The gallery had little money to fund the creation of new work, and no way to insure it, so Cantley and O'Donnell decided to use a different approach, to minimize their own time and expense. They assigned themselves a charrette, a session of rapid prototyping to create the four models in four twelve-hour sessions. They decided that wherever they were at the end of each day, whatever the result of their exercise in pure gesture, the models would be considered finished.

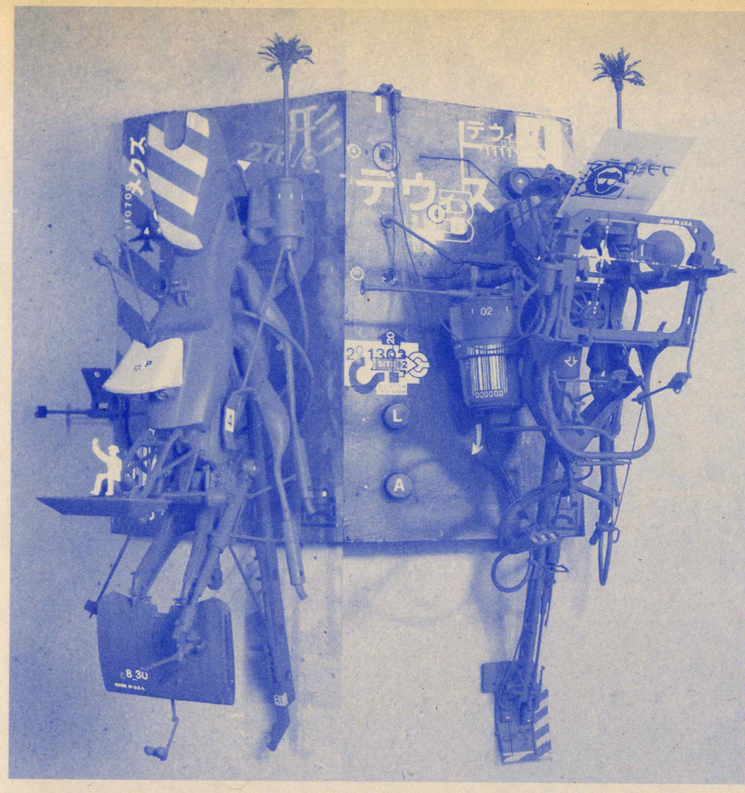
This technique may have been new for Form:uLA, but it is a time-honored strategy in the domain of conceptual art, an ideology that insists on the importance of process over product, and idea over object. The art of conceptual art resides solely in the concept itself. The physical form—ephemera from an activity or performance, a set of instructions for an artwork, or even the artwork itself—is considered ancillary or residual.

Conceptual art, with its assertion that a perfect idea will have a thousand imperfect manifestations, would seem to be the antithesis of architecture, with its quest to fix a perfect reality through one perfect physical form. For Cantley and O'Donnell, this antithesis is the crux of their scrutiny of traditional architectural practice. They argue that built architecture is always the product of compromise: as an idea is translated from concept to drawing to model to built form, the original vision gets buried in "layers of fog."

So as they've developed their own tools, techniques, and investigative objectives, they have allowed chance and spontaneity—albeit an unusual kind of calculated, enforced spontaneity—to play a large role in how they work. In their hands, three-dimensional sketching seems more like play—but serious, engaged play with its own internal set of rules. The sketch models typically contain some percentage of found parts—parts from kits, parts scrounged from hardware store bins, parts rescued from scrap yards. No two parts from the same model kit can go together, nor can parts with the same original color. And occasionally a tiny plastic human figure will find its way onto one of the three-dimensional surfaces, to further confuse any determination of scale.

And within this process, they can find alternative paths to, and alternative definitions for, functionality. The idea for Form:uLA's most recent three-dimensional project sprang from another collaborative experiment, this one on the computer. They superimposed two digital

Composite of 3a Hybrid Model no.A1 and 3a Hybrid Model no.F2, both 2001



drawings, one from each of them, and extrapolated from the layering of converging and diverging lines a new composition. This became the basis for Wallmaker, a possible prototype for a series of what can best be described as robots, or what O'Donnell calls "idealistic architectural cyborgs," each dedicated to a finite construction task.

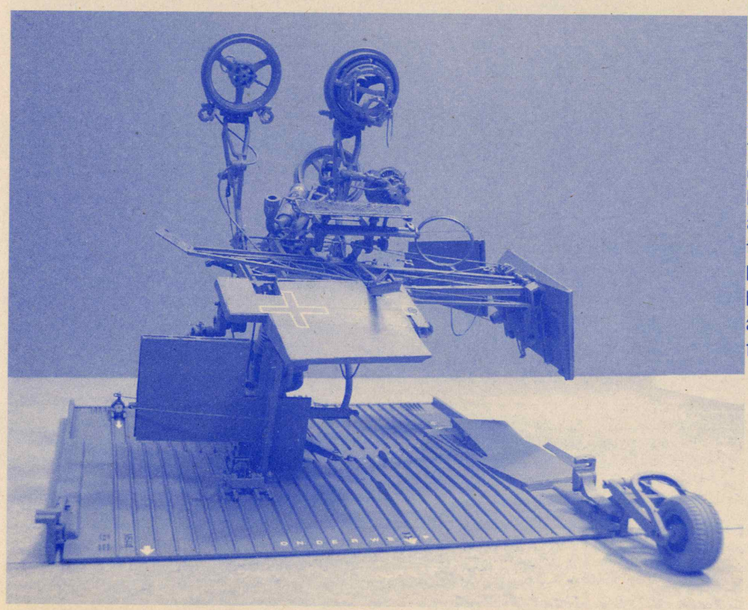
"This one is just going to make walls." O'Donnell explained in the studio. "There might be another one that we design that comes in and punches openings for fenestration."

"Or one that does nothing but scribe lines," Cantley added, "or one that makes ramps."

By this time I was catching on that Wallmaker and its kin, as they evolve in three-dimensional form, will still be purely conceptual creatures, operating within Form:uLA's alternative universe of hybrid dimensions. But I couldn't resist asking, disingenuously, "Will any of these machines actually work?"

O'Donnell gave me a withering look. "It depends on how you define 'work.'"

Which is precisely the point: how is architecture supposed to work? Is it a static vessel or a dynamic system, a concrete environment or a perceptual condition, a proactive or reactive agent? These questions are at the heart of Form:uLA's practice, though the trick seems to be that the questions never get a fixed answer. In the universe of mechudzu, architecture embodies all these things at once, engaging in its own kind of call and response with the humans who imagine it, occupy it, and play very hard at trying to figure it out.



Wallmaker Component A, 2003

SADDLE CREEK | CD'S. LP'S. T-SHIRTS. POSTERS AND MORE AVAILABLE AT WWW.SADDLE-CREEK.COM

NOW IT'S OVERHEAD
FALL BACK OPEN
CD (LBJ-58)
MARCH 9, 2004

Awash in a dark melodic pop sensibility, lush musical soundscapes, and hypnotic vocals, Fall Back Open marks another step in the evolution and emergence of songwriter/studio wizard Andy LeMaster.

Recruiting the help of his Omaha and Athens musical families, Maria and Orenda from Azure Ray are present throughout and Conor Oberst and Michael Stipe help with backing vocals.

AZURE RAY
HOLD ON LOVE
CD/LP (LBJ-54)

THE DRINKS WE DRANK LAST NIGHT
CD SINGLE (LBJ-55)

NEW RESOLUTION
CD SINGLE (LBJ-57)

Azure Ray...have perfected the ethereal, lilting vocal style - their honeyed voices blend together perfectly, almost blurring into one silver thread. - Paste

These ladies still sound as heavenly and amazing as ever...Hold On Love is a heartrending and romantic album. - Under the Radar

Always haunting and always beautiful, Hold On Love shows Azure Ray's underlying warmth. - CMJ New Music Report

(Their) voices intertwine over, around, and into each other, creating thick textures warm enough to melt the most cynical of hearts. - Fahrenheit

ALSO AVAILABLE

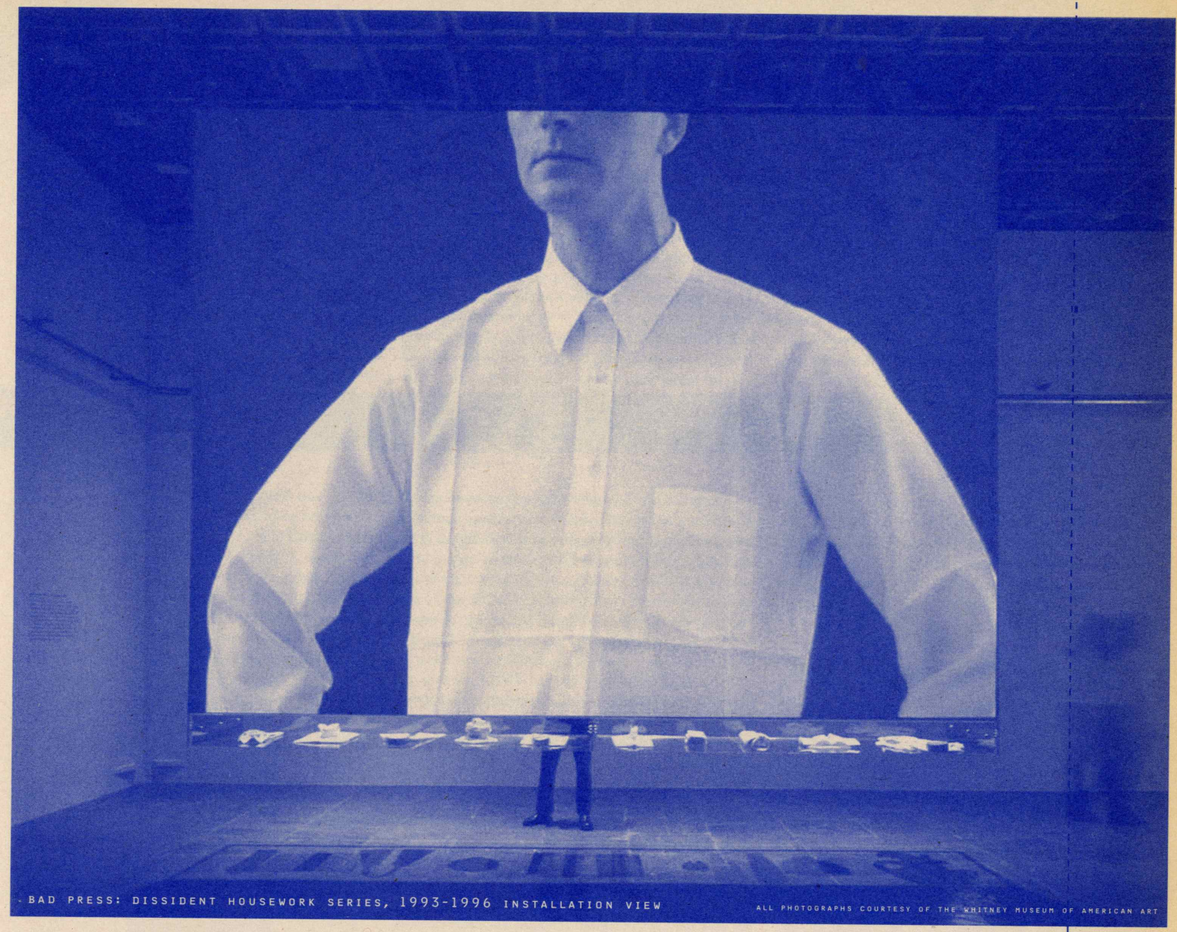
CURSIVE
THE UGLY ORGAN
CD/LP (LBJ-51)

BRIGHT EYES
LIFTED or THE STORY IS IN THE SOIL, KEEP YOUR EAR TO THE GROUND
CD/2xLP (LBJ-46)

NEW RECORDS IN 2004 FROM THE FAINT, RILO KILEY, THE GOOD LIFE, BROKEN SPINDLES AND SON, AMBULANCE

SADDLE CREEK | PO BOX 8554 | OMAHA, NE 68108-0554 | WWW.SADDLE-CREEK.COM | INFO@SADDLE-CREEK.COM

ART REVIEW:



BAD PRESS: DISSIDENT HOUSEWORK SERIES, 1993-1996 INSTALLATION VIEW

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

FLUX = RAD
BY POLLYANNA RHEE

PGS. 62/63

Since a major premise of *Scanning: The Aberrant Architectures of Diller + Scofidio* is based on questioning the canonical function of the museum exhibition, I like to think that Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio would enjoy the reasons I get excited about the Whitney Museum of American Art. The first reason being the fact that indie rockers Stephen Malkmus and David Berman worked there as security guards after graduating from college. The second is the chance to follow around high school students and talk to them about the paintings. If you're worried about the state of American contemporary art you should know that our nation's high school students are all WAY better than de Kooning, Rothko, and Hopper.

Such sentiments are similar to criticism I occasionally hear deriding Diller + Scofidio as "non-architects." (The best part is that many of these people aren't architects either. But neither am I.) For some Levi-Strauss types, architecture needs to be free from the messiness of other disciplines. However, the engagement between architecture, media and other topics that pervade Diller + Scofidio's work results in built projects that question and expand the ways in which we consider architecture and its relationship with culture. The challenge of the museum setting is how to integrate the dynamic aspects of architecture in a static space with, usually, static observers.

If you decide to walk up to the fourth floor to *Scanning* the echo of a female voice asking, "Hey you, you wanna buy a full set of encyclopedias with a four-color atlas?" greets you in the stairwell. Unless you're particularly observant you probably won't notice the tiny screen showing the video portion of *Soft Sell*, 1993. In its interrogation *Soft Sell* engages the viewer, starting the process of making visitors active participants in the exhibit. The museum has already changed the experience of the piece. Imagine Times Square just starting to clean up in 1993, with

>>>

Soft Sell peddling hot tips in the windows of a former house-o-porn—the original installation is so specific to a time and place that I can only consider the work in its current Whitney-fied context.

Compared to the other floors the fourth floor is noisy. The drill that makes holes in the walls every two minutes is actually pretty quiet, but the audio from the installations flows through the rooms and people are chatty. I think the garrulousness is a good sign—people are interacting and thinking about the questions that Diller + Scofidio ask.

In questioning the conventions of everyday life it's a thin line between pedagogical insight and dogmatism. Diller + Scofidio usually traipse comfortably along on the side of the former with just a few lapses. The most glaring example of the latter is *Pageant* 1997. The animation projected on the ground of corporate logos morphing into one another over an ominous buzz is not a trenchant commentary on the consolidation of corporations. It's hackneyed and succeeds at being overdone and warmed over at the same time. The most interesting thing about Pageant is the white streaks on the black wall caused by the drill from Mural. But it does get better.

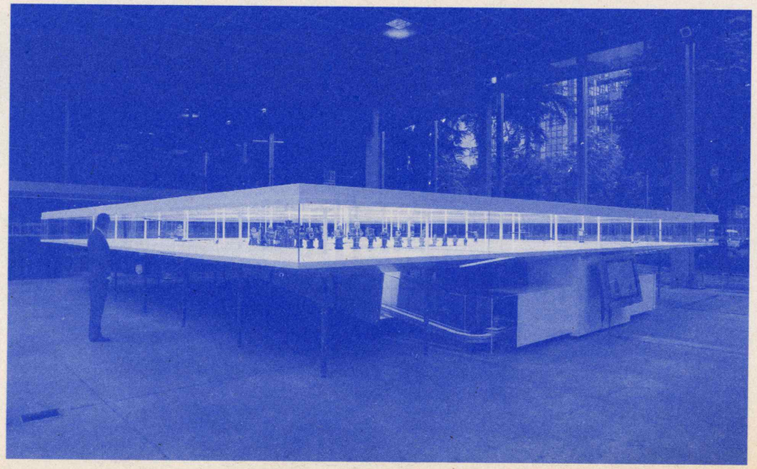
Diller + Scofidio's long-standing work regarding the relationship between museums and architecture is executed through *Mural*, 2003. As with *Para-site*, 1989 at MoMA and *Tourisms: suitCase Studies*, 1991 at Walker Art Center (recreated in *Scanning*), *Mural* upends museum conventions by gradually destroying the boundaries between exhibit rooms. Every two minutes the computer-controlled drill puts a hole in a random spot in the wall. By the time *Scanning* ends the divisions between the rooms will be practically non-existent. In a museum setting it is often difficult to maintain the power of architecture and avoid presenting architecture solely as "art." As one possible solution to this quandary, Mural is nearly perfect—the architecture of the exhibit becomes dominant. What is on or separated by the walls is less important than what is happening to the spaces. The architecture is not a passive entity, but something of constant notice.

Given my enjoyment of watching people interacting in museums, I spend a few minutes observing how people cross into the room with *The American Lawn: Surfaces of Everyday Life*, 1998. Taking over the width and length of the foyer is *The American Lawn: Welcome Mat*, a camera pan of a suburban lawn, following the movement of a sprinkler, projected onto the floor. Just about every visitor hesitates for a few seconds while staring at the ground before tip-toeing across the projected image. Some look around furtively as if they're waiting for someone else to cross first to make sure they're doing it correctly or to avoid the security guard who might admonish them. A couple people cling to the wall as they make their way across the image and into the room. The joke's on them, as *The American Lawn* features View-Master-type slides of suburban neighbors' abutted lawns and the radical differences between the two sides of the property line. *The American Lawn* portrays our obsessive conventions of lawn and garden care with deftness and humor. Diller + Scofidio aren't telling you that you suck because you're anal about your lawn and secretly hate your next door neighbor for putting that windmill right next to the property line; they're just pointing out that a few things about quotidian life are a bit strange.

The largest piece in the exhibition, *Master/Slave*, 1999, features small robots running systematically along a track, but no one's actually looking at it. Everyone is staring instead at the screens with surveillance camera footage of the robots moving. The first time I noticed this, the obnoxious grad student in me almost wet her pants over the number of references to Baudrillard and Foucault just waiting to be cited about this scene. But then I realized it would make me that girl, so I'll just say that if you're like me and easily amused, then it's pretty funny to watch. Besides the homage to Duchamp evidenced in the *Tourism: suitCase Studies* installation, *Uncovered*, 2003 hangs as part of the wall in the room. Previously the home of a famous urinal at pre-QNS MoMA, Uncovered is supposedly the only piece of wall immune from the drill, but the twenty-seven holes drilled in a 9 x 3 in. rectangle in the upper-right corner prove otherwise.

From *Mural* to the projections on the floors, *Scanning* constantly calls attention to the architectural spaces of the exhibit. Those who examine Diller + Scofidio's oeuvre and dismiss them as "non-architects" miss the point. Through their multidisciplinary approach Diller + Scofidio honor and challenge architecture in a way that would not be possible if they limited their practice to redoing lofts. Architecture is too important and difficult for relegation into just one field of inquiry. In much of their work in performance art, theater, and multimedia, Diller + Scofidio call attention to the setting, blurring the lines between the space and the action, making sure that we know that the built environment matters. The paucity of examples of more traditional architectural projects is initially disappointing, but there's just enough (Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, Eyebeam in Manhattan, Slow House, Blur Building) to serve as evidence of Diller + Scofidio's inventiveness and thought translated through architecture.

I found one other encouraging pedagogical function of Scanning that's less amorphous. You don't need to know a lot about art or architecture to understand Diller + Scofidio's concerns. *Scanning* works against the idea of museum as mausoleum; instead it interrogates and provokes the visitor. All around are questions—Why are we so fastidious about our lawns and property? What does it mean to be a tourist? Why are we looking? What is the relation between our actions and our environment? And are our responses affected because these questions and ideas are presented in these forms and spaces? Diller + Scofidio have created works that make art and architecture vehicles for learning and thinking, not just things to be stared at vacuously. It would be no bad thing if *Scanning* encouraged some to look closer, read and learn about art and architecture, so the next time they see de Kooning's *Woman and Bicycle* their first thought won't be "My kid could do that."

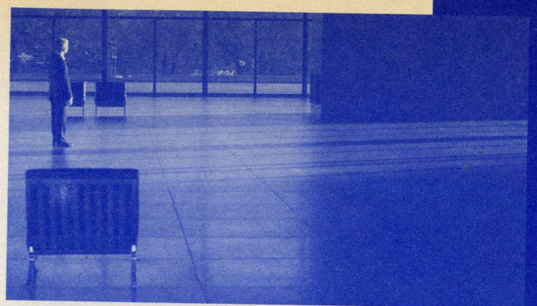


Master/Slave, 1999

ART REVIEWS CONT.

IÑIGO MANGLANO-OVALLE, ALLTAGSZEIT (IN ORDINARY TIME), 2001

REVIEWED BY DARRIN ALFRED



Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's video installation *In Ordinary Time* is a cinematic experience. For sixteen hallucinatory minutes the architectural space captured by *Alltagszeit (In Ordinary Time)* encompasses an entire universe.

The narrative of the piece is rather ordinary: the sun rises and falls, an assemblage of characters walk, sit and stand, the day begins, ends and begins again. But there is nothing ordinary about the stage Manglano-Ovalle chose for this performance: the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, Mies van der Rohe's final Modernist cathedral, finished just before his death in 1969. The pavilion, a simple structure wrapped by four transparent walls of glass, is elegantly democratic—a space of genuine freedom and possibility able to be reconfigured for any number of uses. Its open plan captures light in an otherworldly way, generating a continuous vista of shifting planes, changing surfaces, and subtle patterns.

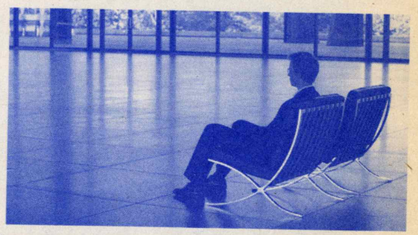
Manglano-Ovalle explores each of these effects with his lingering camera, revealing every architectural nuance as his subjects travel to different points of the interior through the course of a day. Although the action is mundane, I followed the installation's narrative with the same attentiveness I would a more conventional film. By the time the piece was finished I felt an almost sensory familiarity with a space I've never actually visited.

In Ordinary Time is the third and final work in Manglano-Ovalle's Mies trilogy, in which the artist continues his exploration of Modernist spaces and the abandoned utopian ideals they represent. In 2001 the three video installations, including *Le Baiser/The Kiss,* 1999, and *Climate,* 2000, were organized as a traveling exhibition by the Cranbrook Art Museum.

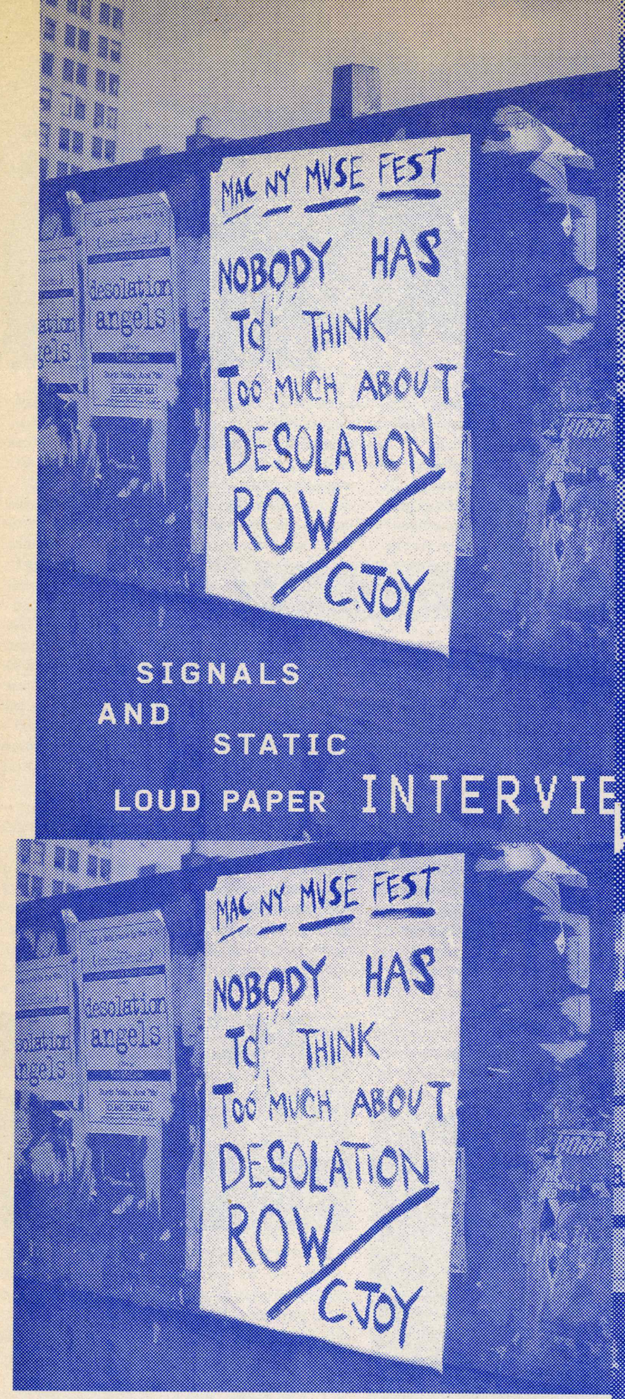
The other two video works, as installed at the Orange County Museum of Art, included additional architectural structures in the gallery to augment the projections and delineate the space. These suspended armatures—metal framing around the screens and through the spaces where visitors were to stand or sit—seemed like an effort on the artist's part to extend the artificial space of the videos into the gallery. An architectural gesture, but in the end, the effect was distracting.

Free of extraneous materials and without seating, *In Ordinary Time* is physically engaging on its own terms. The Neue Nationalgalerie unfurls as a near-life size projection in its own room. Standing for the duration of the loop, I found myself identifying with the young blond Germań, my token host throughout the quarter-hour presentation. With his back to the camera, the young man stares out the glass walls towards Berlin's urban landscape, seeing what I see, watching the clouds and the sun float across the sky. Other individuals appear and reappear, often in pairs, briefly looking back, just to the side of the camera as if they are looking past me. Some portions of the video play in real time, while in others the sunlight races across the floor in time-lapsed sequences. Many of the figures—a man with a child, an Asian woman—enter the space and gaze into the distance, shifting slightly from their left to right foot or vice versa. When sped up, this motion is very apparent, calling attention to the shifting I myself have been awkwardly making, as I've been forced to stand throughout the video. Is this some connection, some statement that I am *ordinary* like the players on the screen? Am I also frozen in this space, bound to play out the same drudgery indefinitely? In asking myself these questions, I realized that it was quite possible that Manglano-Ovalle had achieved something in this video that Mies never could—the Neue Nationalgalerie becomes a universal space, a populist setting, rather than iconic architecture.

The work is mesmerizing. The hypnotic soundtrack of impending doom, arranged by composer and electronic musician Jeremy Boyle, perfectly accompanies the montage of light, movement and form that danced across the screen. For those sixteen minutes I felt truly transported to another place, another *architectural* space and this is a feat no ordinary artwork could accomplish.

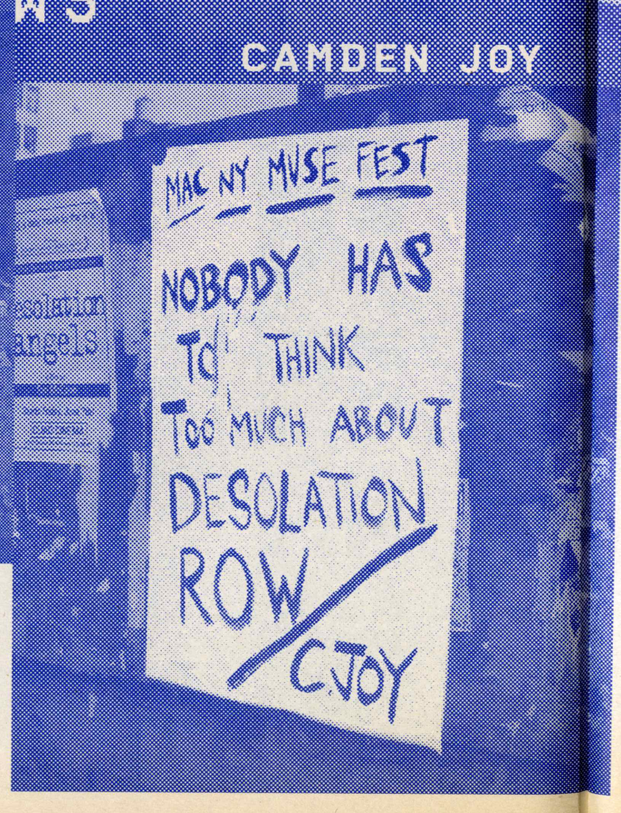


top + bottom: *Alltagszeit (In Ordinary Time),* 2001



SIGNALS
AND
STATIC
LOUD PAPER INTERVIEWS

CAMDEN JOY



CAMDEN JOY IS A MUSIC CRITIC, FICTION WRITER, RADIO JOURNALIST, ONE-TIME MUSICIAN, GUERRILLA ARTIST, AND PROLIFIC GENERATOR OF RANDOM RANTS ON POP CULTURE AND URBAN LIFE. AN ANTHOLOGY OF HIS WORK, LOST JOY, WAS PUBLISHED BY TNI BOOKS IN 2002.

LP: I DON'T KNOW WHOM I AM TALKING TO. AM I TALKING TO CAMDEN JOY?

CJ: Yes. Yes you are. It's a pseudonym but you know my defense of that is that it is a pseudonym like Bob Dylan, like W.C. Fields, like the Marx Brothers. Like they got to change their names and no one gives them grief. I have another name.

I was attempting some sort of literary experiment when I started writing using that character and naming the pieces by the same person. The by-product a pseudonym creates is that people are not able to trust me, they feel like I am lying with everything I say. I get this strange reception, whereas if I was a rap star and I called myself whatever I did, people would just accept that and it would be fine. That doesn't answer your question though.

LP: SO WHERE DID THE NAME COME FROM?

CJ: I was looking for a name that had a short, compact sound, and I knew the syllable count I wanted. I had remembered that when I was writing about Trenton, N.J., someone in Trenton asked, "Why are you setting this story in Trenton?" I said I just wanted one of the darkest, saddest places in the country, and I figure that if you can find a reason to go on in a city like Trenton then that is a beacon that can carry you through anything.

And they said, "Oh, Trenton is not so bad at all, you ought to go to Camden."

I always thought of Camden Joy as something that would carry you through the darkest times. A friend of mine and I, we had this theory that one of the things that art should do is acknowledge, never shy away from, the darkest truths. So the point is to admit, to acknowledge the dark truths and then go on. We called it "Kick Start." That was our little artistic movement. And then we proceeded to do nothing with it. But when Camden Joy came along I was thinking that it sort of works with the Kick Start movement.

LP: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR RECENT COLLECTION OF PAST WORK, LOST JOY.

CJ: I have wanted Lost Joy to be published in some form or another since 1997 and it has just taken this long. It has a lot of things that I self-published, I mean, everything in there that did get published. That meant when I kept going down to Kinko's and making more copies.

LP: I AM INTRIGUED BY THE WHEAT-PASTED POSTERS IN THE CHAPTER OF LOST JOY, "THIS POSTER WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE."

CJ: The thing that drew me to posters, and that ultimately ended up, by the last poster project, figuring out that was at the source of it was the way in which the street kind of mirrors the radio.

In my experience listening to radios, I am never very good at tuning in stations or figuring out what I am listening to. Usually I hear things, they grab my ear and I have no idea what they are called, where to find them or anything. I describe them to people and they have no idea and they are just lost.

I am fascinated by all aspects of disappearance and invisibility, the shadowy sorts of experiences that are at the heart of so much that we encounter. Usually we filter things out, but the radio offers an almost tangible version of those times when we either fall in love with a song for a real short bit and lose it forever and it just becomes a legend in our mind, or we discover someone and they become a favorite. There is a mystery to the radio in the way that it doesn't have a location. I understand the science behind the way it travels, but it still always seemed extremely mysterious how it arrives in our little receivers.

When I moved to New York I was intrigued by the free use of the streets. Which is hardly free, cause the police would ticket you if they found you postering but similarly I suppose if you have a pirate radio station they will find you and ticket you. And I was intrigued by the way it was entering this dialogue with a bunch of other people-you would put up a poster and it would get covered over by another poster or only slightly covered or smeared or changed by the weather or changed by people walking by who would write on it sometimes. And those were always the best-they would read it and then go and give their opinion.

And I was interested in that and that was the thing I wanted to mention to you. Just that the radio and the street seemed like similar ___ ... I don't know what the noun is there. They are not both media, they are both canvases, I guess.

LP: TRAFFIC OR STATIC...

CJ: Yeah, I was intrigued by static and introducing into my own writing distortion and static. Which occurs naturally when I'm on the street but was another reason for the unreliable narrator, the untrustworthy storytelling and stuff. I was listening to Sonic Youth and I was wondering how to bring fuzz into storytelling. How do you lose the narrator behind a wall of sound?

LP: YOU GREW UP FIRST OUTSIDE OF LOS ANGELES AND THEN IN L.A. AND THEN IN NEW YORK. DO YOU THINK WHERE YOU HAVE LIVED HAS INFLUENCED HOW YOU WRITE OR YOUR TASTE IN MUSIC?

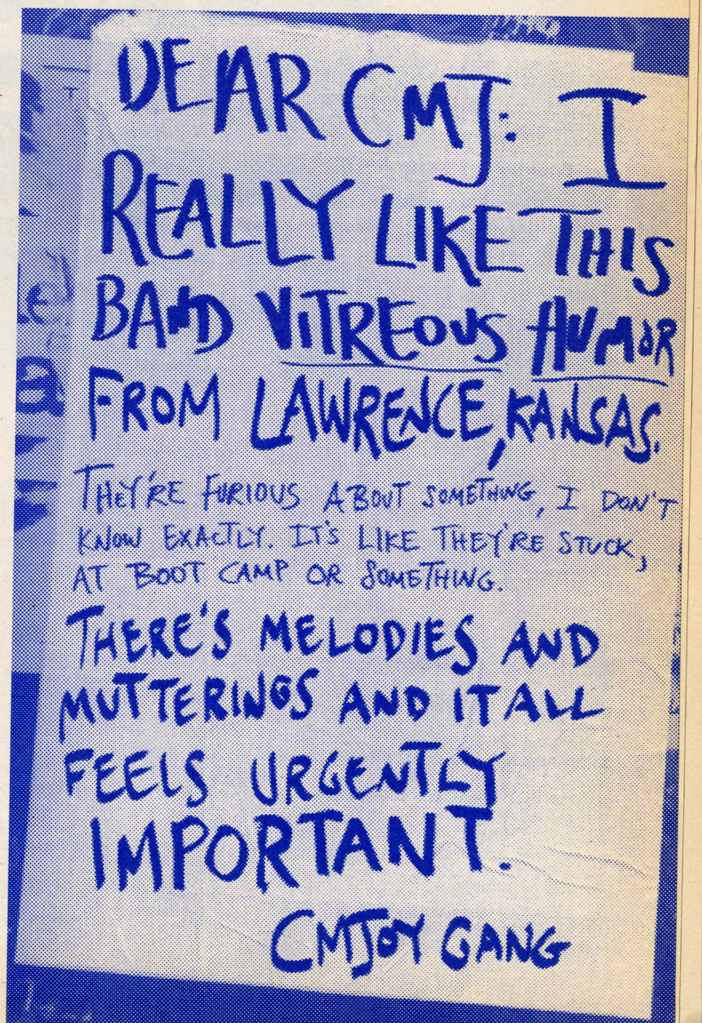
CJ: I grew up in an agricultural area outside of Los Angeles and I'd go see bands in L.A. and I could understand them being referred to as L.A. bands cause they would talk about local landmarks in their music. When I lived in New York every other band was described as the "New York sound." But I had a band and my music didn't make sense in terms of the Talking Heads, Television or whatever the New York music was supposed to sound like. Then I realized it doesn't mean anything anymore. And that is one of the great things about radio. Radio transcends neighborhoods. It liberates the kids who didn't have the good fortune to grow up in urban areas. I grew up listening to a great radio station that had a long signal all the way from Pasadena and reached me a hundred miles away. And that was my lifeline and where I learned things.

xxx

CJ: I figured out my two favorite buildings in Los Angeles: Dodger Stadium and the Griffith Observatory.

LP: WHY?

CJ: That's hard to say. I was interested, once I realized that they were my two favorites, that they both share something I don't really like, which is an almost cartoonish-ness. But at the same time they are also very useful. I think that what I really liked is that they both have a perspective on the city that is really nice. And the view of L.A. from the upper stands of Dodger Stadium and the view of L.A. from the wall around Griffith Observatory were things I never tired of. So I always went to the ball game and to the observatory and I drank in the view of the city.



MUSIC REVIEWS

01.

02.

03.

04.

05.

06.

07. <NONE>

08. <NONE>

01.
EL GUAPO
FAKE FRENCH
DISCHORD RECORDS

02.
BLACK EYES
SELF-TITLED
DISCHORD RECORDS

Every music label undergoes some sort of renaissance in its history. Dischord Records is no different. The label that was founded in 1980 by Minor Threat front man Ian MacKaye and drummer Jeff Nelson has already been carving out territory for itself in this new millennium. Bands like Fugazi, Nation of Ulysses, Jawbox, and Shudder to Think that came out of Dischord have always packed a punch and have prided themselves on being different that the norm. In short, almost any band on Dischord is worth a listen, and chances are no matter what you pick it will be something new and powerful, but there are a couple newer ones not to miss.

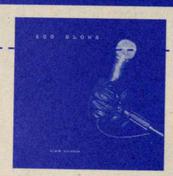
El Guapo picks up the pieces from the disco ball that the kids from Black Eyes kicked over and puts it back together delivering a smooth stomp for the post-rock electronica crowd. Eschewing the traditional electro "I Want More Cocaine" sound being regurgitated by some indie bands these days, the three chaps of El Guapo churn out a smooth, almost trance-like selection of post-rock tunes that defy expectations and, like Black Eyes, will get you off your bar stool and onto the dance floor. Relying an repetitive lyrical structure of thick layers of refrains mixed with slivers of stern poetry, El Guapo's newest project, Fake French, is electronic post-rock with a decidedly edgy undertone, making it perfect excuse for transition for the "I only say I hate keyboards" set. (John Southern)

03.
YO LA TENGO
SUMMER SUN
MATADOR RECORDS

Watch out! Those happy-go-lucky kids from Hoboken, New Jersey are at it again. Ira Kaplan, Georgia Hubley and James McNew of Yo La Tengo give a volatile spread of tunes on the bands newest project Summer Sun. This album follows in the darker, moodier roots of And Then Nothing Turned Itself Inside-Out and seeks to marry Yo La Tengo's love of quirky pop tunes, with their fascination for the scattered, atmospheric chaos of jazz-influenced improvisation. Gone from this album is the heavy chug-a-lug guitars fuzz that was a Yo La Tengo trademark on their earlier albums Electro-O-Pura and I Can Hear the Hear Beating as One.

Have no fear, they still have an edge.

Always the merry pranksters, Ira and Georgia toss their stylistic beach ball back and forth between songs, leaving the listener to smile through the tears, and laughing at the heartache. An example is the track "Season of the Shark," an upbeat, cliche' of a pop song that sets you up for an emotional slide, as the sultrier track "Today is the Day" takes over. The lighter songs on Summer Sun overlay a bitter undercurrent, while the darker tracks project an unwavering optimism. It is as if someone is calling you to tell you that you are dying, but that you just won a million dollars. Confused? No matter, Ira and Georgia will see you through. Summer Sun is a beautiful album, an honest album, and one that you'll play over and over again. (JS)



09.

Black Eyes, and El Guapo, both prime examples of the new thoroughbreds Dischord is stocking in its stables. Both groups hail from the East Coast and deliver a unique, enriching sound that is lost in an indie scene that is rife with stale copycat bands and rough-in-tumble wanna-bes. The comparison lies in that each band is a perfect example of punk's divergent evolution into post-rock and gritty electronica. Either way you cut it though, these two groups define their own music, rather than adhering to popular definition.

Black Eyes are James Brown for the punk set. They deliver tight, throbbing beats, juxtaposed with a scruffy, static guitar sound that will have you grabbing your partners—spiky-belted hips and jamming across the dance floor. Scrambled vocals compound the staccato pump of the drums, which mix with slithering baselines, all to produce a delicious, danceable buzz of sound. Black Eyes are as sloppy and as sexy as a drunken make out session on the booze soaked floor of a back street bar. Their debut self-titled album will put the funk back in your hips and the scrap back in your style.

10. <NONE>

04.
ZERO 7
ANOTHERLATENIGHT
KINETIC

What does the international hipster listen to when he or she wants to clear their mind of the stresses of being trendsetters and relax bodies, weary from jetlag? They listen to Zero 7's Anotherlatenight compilation. Zero 7 has exquisite taste, this is not a compiling of their songs but a mix of old and new music selections that they find highly attractive. The mood is set with hip-hop vibes swept up in a sandstorm of jazz rhythms with a pinch of tropical tempos thrown in for good measure. In a succession of the Anotherlatenight anthology that gives insight into the inspiration of today's musical maestros, Zero 7's is the best of the series by far. At its most useful when you've stayed up way past your bedtime or for those moments when you need an excuse to. (Courtney Walker)

MUSIC REVIEWS CONT.

05.
ROYKSOPP
MELODY AM
WALL OF SOUND

This CD should come with a warning label: Royksopp's Melody AM will usurp any notions you had about ambient music. With the song-building skills of Groove Armada and definitive 80s synths, Melody AM alerts to all that lounging around and chilling out is the new clubbing and going out. Combining ambient souls, electronic funk, homoerotic discotheque and hypnotic rhythms, this is one of the few listenable full length efforts of the downbeat electronica movement. This album is best suited for wading around in the post-club afterglow until it dawns on you that you could have stayed home and heard better music without wasting your money on over-priced drinks and a cover charge. (CW)

06.
THE HIDDEN CAMERAS
THE SMELL OF OUR OWN
ROUGH TRADE

If Brian Wilson were a kinky Canadian homo, he would have recorded The Smell of Our Own, the second LP from mastermind Joel Gibb and his band, The Hidden Cameras. Awash in summertime pop with lefty lyrics that straddle costume and confession, The Hidden Cameras hint at a gay state-of-affairs. "Ban Marriage" rallies against society's sacred ritual of contractual monogamy, seen through the eyes of a man late to his ceremony because he "stayed up too late the night before fingering foreign dirty holes in the dark." Gibb states, "we aren't fools to fall in love but let 'coupledom' die." And it's so damn catchy! (No, not just the idea, the melody, too.)

Lyrically, Gibb's earnestness resembles Wayne Coyne of The Flaming Lips. Sometimes Gibb overpacks his lines, forcing them forward while the vocals stay too low in the mix. More often though, whereas Coyne sings of sci-fi showdowns, Gibb belts lucid the hedonistic and wistfully tragic underbelly of gay society. Song topics include straight married men who like gay sex and Main-Street queers into all-nite self-denial. Have I mentioned the urine?

Bookending the album are two songs that shower golden gorgeous, "Golden Streams" (complete with golden tears, a golden wand, a golden rod, a golden stone and a golden bone) and "The Man That I Am With My Man." The latter is a sweetheart portraiture revealing a close relationship ripe with licking and probing, the joy of borrowed clothes and of course, peeing. It's this candor that endures, as it transcends kitsch and sidesteps snide...besides, who can resist orchestrated pop with a pipe organ, vibes and sleigh bells?

The Hidden Cameras will not solve your problems. While their politics are refreshing and their music is splendid, they prefer to be your voyeuristic, level-headed neighbor who's got better things going on in his basement than you do in your bedroom. Kinda sounds just like Canada, no? (Todd Shalom)

07.
THE NEW PORNOGRAPHERS
ELECTRIC VERSION
MATADOR

With so many high profile albums released this year, it's hard to imagine an indie record having the potential of turning heads away from the mainstream, especially if the band responsible is considered "just a side project" by some. But on their latest album, Electric Version, The New Pornographers manage to create an intoxicating blend of sugar and substance that is capable of leaving its mark. Their second release is as sharp as a tack, bringing together the talents of a number of diverse musicians and friends who share a love of powerpop sensibilities and catchy lyrics. And while each member puts their own particular spin on varying parts of the album, the resulting melodies converge as a cohesive whole, leaving the listener no time to drool between songs.

The group wastes no time cranking out the sunshine, urging listeners to call in sick and head for the beaches. Beginning with the title track, brainchild Carl Newman's falsetto voice toys with the first few lines, holding back until Alt-Country siren Neko Case's effortless harmonies punch holes through the ozone. Anthemic guitars glitter while infectious choruses cascade on "The Laws Have Changed," when Case proclaims "All hail...what will be revealed today? When we peer to the great unknown, from the land of the throne." Retro keyboards pulsate alongside fast paced drumming, submerging the listener in sound that has been drenched in new-wave decadence. And in "All for Swinging You Around," hooks within hooks lead the way to a happier time, when kids like Kevin Bacon could teach a town how to dance. Clocking in at a little over forty-five minutes, The New Pornographers' refreshingly energetic take on powerpop is both catchy and inspiring. While new releases come and go, Electric Version transcends the occasional fling that can litter a record collection, reminding us that sometimes a spoonful of sugar is just what the doctor ordered. (Sean Baca)

08.
ALIAS
MUTED
ANTICON RECORDS

The artcore Anticon beat-scholar, Alias, welds brain and beauty on this excellent follow-up to his highly acclaimed Eyes Closed EP and first full-length instrumental work, Muted. The beatsmith behind most of Sole's solo works and former Deep Puddle Dynamics member, Alias has eloquently evolved his luscious syrupy compositions into a solid album.

Similar to the countryside glitchscapes of Boards of Canada and Four Tet, or the emotive noodlings of Amon Tobin, Alias constructs mood-spaces that shift from second to second yet are still firmly rooted in hip-hop. Static-filled voices sway into delicious sluggish beatwork on the opening cut, "Begin Again" that is vividly akin to vintage BoC circa, music has the right to children. The melodic beatbox of "Sixes Last" morphs into a delicious progressive-Miami Bass booty bump. On the meticulously minimal track, "Unseen Sights," featuring Marcus Acher, Alias exemplifies that he can still shine despite the dim glimmer of Acher's monochromatic vocals. The sizzle here remains the subtle anti-war vocal sample on "One Obvious Rule" elucidates the concept that instrumental-based work doesn't mean depoliticized music, as its drony beat fizzes into a nameless voice that reminds us to "just remember two words: governments die... good starting point for any citizen."

Ultimately, the cartoony Anticon collective of everyman-rhymers and art-school beatmakers, specifically Alias, solidify the idea that the greatest resistance to the corporatized space of hip-hop and electronic music is to simply construct good albums. Beauty, as Alias proves, rests in beats not bombs. (Martin de Leon II)

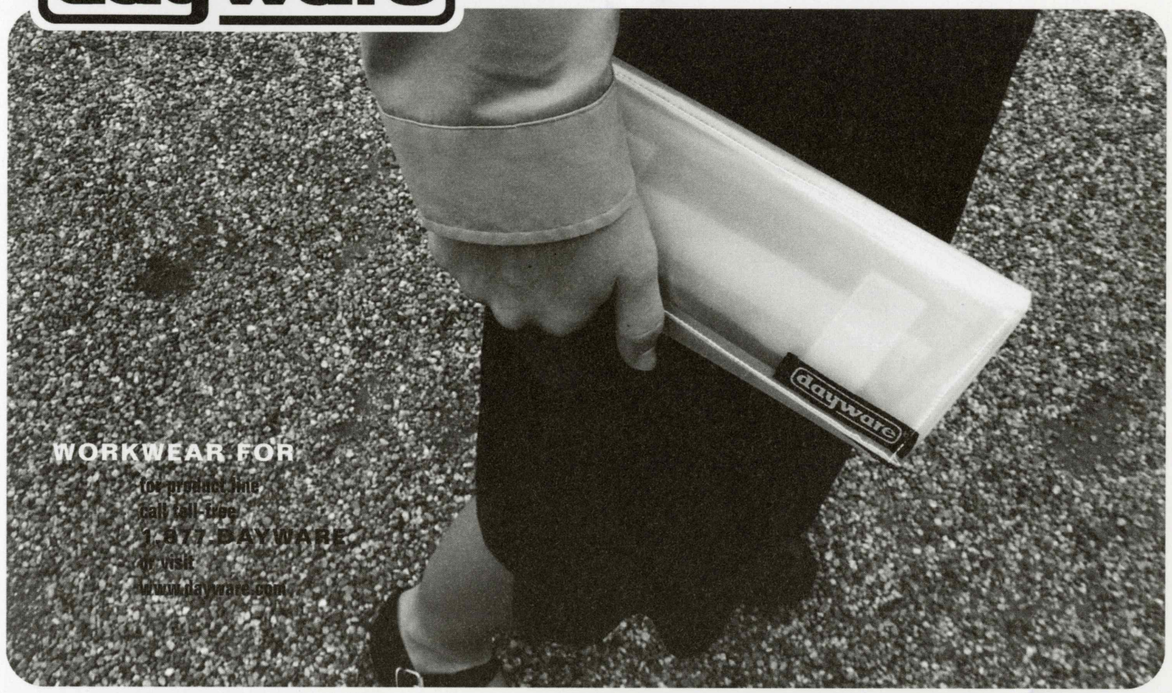
09.
400 BLOWS
BLACK RAINBOW
TONE CAPSULE RECORDS

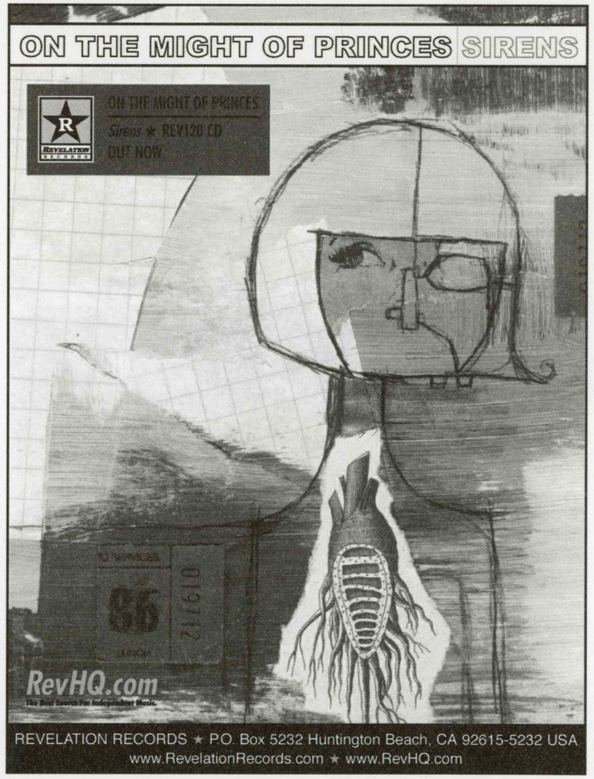
What were we talking about the other night? Fiberglass chairs & fucking? No, no, 400 Blows, that's right. I knew it was something that puts a smile on my face. Black Rainbow...so Ronnie James Dios. The heavy heavy happiness of it all. Black Rainbow is amazing. An atom bomb going off in your ear (let the cliches fly baby!) Christian's wide wailin' chords. Thick. Propellant. Monster guides through the time changes. Guitar riffing enough for two bands. Who needs a bass player? My body responds like it did with Ginn. Like it still does with Buzzo. The true beauty: Skot's vocals are decipherable for once. Skot is the venerable punky popster, performing with all the snot and nonchalance of a teenager. Sure, he knows better, but he still hasn't learned his lessons. Naughty boy. And finally, Ferdi. Too low in the mix? I want more. More drums. More noise. Bigger. Louder. Rawer!

Black Rainbow is a loud (albeit under-mixed) project. Yeah, the balance is a bit off. "Dr. Albini. Paging Dr. Albini." The composition of each song is classic hardcore - a simplistic, yet forceful order that Greg Ginn or perhaps Paige Hamilton would appreciate. This is aggressive music that has no rhyme nor reason and has just enough piddling in the musical gene pool to produce a unique experience... one to be appreciated in a hardcore scene full of poseurs and wannabes. It doesn't rely on the classic pop-bait of lost loves and self pity. It is like your best friend handing you a tallboy after he/she blackened your eye in a drunken brawl. Each song takes nothing for granted and lunges forward like a drunk falling down a flight of stairs. I've never been one to mosh, per se, but this here music is just the thing to catapult me right into the arena to take my 400 Blows and continue jousting amongst my fellow good patrons, lunging drunks all! (Julia Brown and John Southern)

10.
IRVING
I HOPE YOU'RE FEELING BETTER NOW
EENIE MEENIE RECORDS

Pop draws you in, pumps you full of carbonated sugar syrup and leaves you bubbly and hollow. The curious thing about Irving's record, I Hope You're Feeling Better Now, is that it delivers the bubblegum licks, but laces them with some unexpected flavors. The longest song on the EP, "The Curious Thing About Leather," starts off in a moody-guitar and tambourine languor spotted with Beach Boys harmonic La-las and grinds into an Emo churn which ends in a straightforward on-beat pop song two-minutes into the track. Several genres are scrambled together before trumpets sound and take the piece home. "Please Give Me Your Heart, Is All I Need," is another combo platter: part orange Creamsicle, part East River oil slick. The Los Angeles band is made up of five members (Aaron Burrow, Brian Canning, Alex Church, Steven Scott and Brent Turner) each of who write songs and sing lead. Perhaps it's that collaboration which informs Irving's musical concoctions. Or perhaps it's that culture is crashing together in a Sizzler salad bar heap and Irving is providing the soundtrack for dumpster diving. (Mimi Zeiger)




ON THE MIGHT OF PRINCES SIRENS
ON THE MIGHT OF PRINCES
Sirens ★ REV120 CD
OUT NOW
RevHQ.com
REVELATION RECORDS ★ P.O. Box 5232 Huntington Beach, CA 92615-5232 USA
www.RevelationRecords.com ★ www.RevHQ.com

PROTECTING WHAT THEY WANT TO DESTROY

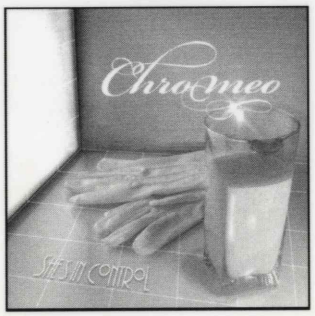
VINYL CDs FREE MP3s ZINES + BOOKS
DVDs + VIDEOs ONLINE TICKET ORDERS

INSOUND.COM INSOUND.COM INSOUND.COM INSOUND.COM INSOUND.COM INSOUND.

AGF,
Westernization Completed

Drawing on a wide variety of inspirations, including fashion design, painting, cinematography & electronic correspondence, AGF exploits the editing process to weave together an intricate and compelling narrative about her life and her relationship with the world around her. Hardcover book/CD.

ORTHLORNG MUSORK



CHROMEO,
She's in Control

Chromeo is Pee Thug and Dave 1, best friends & hip-hop encyclopedias. Their blend of rigorously catchy song structures, memorable hooks and twirling guitar solos conjures up images of either a sophisticated, thugged-out Hall & Oates, or the subconscious meeting of Daft Punk and N.E.R.D.

VICE RECORDINGS

THE DYING CALIFORNIAN,
We Are the Birds That Stay

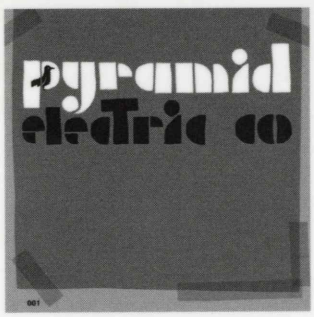
Not Post-Rock. Not Now Wave. Not New York. West Coast country tinged indie rockers The Dying Californian's new album is recommended for fans of Neil Young, early REM, late night drinking with friends, Neutral Milk Hotel, long drives & the local dive bar.

TURN RECORDS

ILL LIT,
I Need You

Containing the best elements of Rock, vintage Americana and electronic cut & paste sonic pastiches, ill lit's second album *i need you* endeavors to turn the perfect pop song on its head.

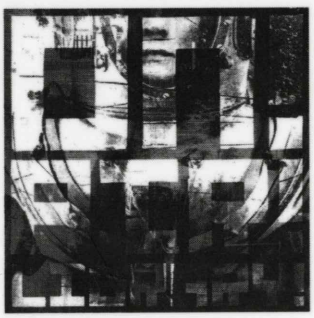
BADMAN RECORDING CO.



JASON MOLINA,
Pyramid Electric Co

Most of the album is just Molina in a chair with a guitar, except on one tune he's at the piano; he is Nina Simone and he is singing his guts out. Although the Songs: Ohia frontman is all alone on this album, this is not a sparse recording. He is surrounded on all sides by ghosts and an otherworldly sonic ambience thanks to producer Mike Mogis.

SECRETLY CANADIAN



ON!AIRILIBRARY!,
Self-titled

A daringly diverse set of songs that look at pop through a prism, finds the band using its atmospherics as a jumping off point. Guitars echo and ricochet about as drums, samples and vocals swirl together cohesively, creating a hypnotic blend not heard since Portishead were in their prime. Do not miss this record.

ARENA ROCK RECORDING CO.

STEREOLAB,
Margerine Eclipse

For nearly a decade, Stereolab have produced one of music's most acclaimed bodies of work. On their new album, *Margerine Eclipse*, Stereolab refine and expand their subversive musical explorations - jangle, groove, rhythm, melody, and sweet, dreamy singing combine to create a distinct, sometimes soothing, sometimes disturbing vision.

ELEKTRA RECORDS

SUFJAN STEVENS,
Seven Swans

Seven Swans is a testament to Sufjan's songwriting, first and foremost. The songs are the foundation, and Sufjan's voice, the instruments, and his friends, all dance around the songs to celebrate where they come from. Where do they come from? We just hope the music never stops. Highly recommended.

SOUNDS FAMILYRE

FOR 15% OFF YOUR ORDER
USE COUPON CODE: LOVE-LOUDP